THE COMMONWEAL

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HOPE AND THE HOLLY WREATH

ONE hates to think what the world would have been like if Marley had not died. Deeply as we may regret the completeness and finality of his demise (being cold as a coffin-nail has its obvious mournful disadvantages) the effect was nothing short of marvelously stimulating. People who could not join heartily in a Christmas feast were at least dispensed from a gloomy workaday fast. If all did not burn candles before the Cross, at least they lighted them upon a tree. It happened to be the superb virtue of Charles Dickens that he could always take a human being for his text. So many other people, in the days before his time, had gone violently wrong by beginning with a dictum, even a very holy dictum. The faults of the world, as he faced them, were in a large measure attributable to the fact that the Puritans would stand on nothing but the Bible, and the philosophers on nothing but a theory. Oddly enough, it had apparently escaped attention that Holy Writ could be of little importance to heaven itself—that the only conceivable reason why it existed at all was because heaven, in a towering manifestation of affection, had attributed a certain importance to man. The little human plant had been carefully nursed by the hand of Divinity during several thousands of years; and if it had failed to reveal some slight improvement as a result, one might well be in a quandary to determine where were the traces of heaven upon the earth. Even the honest merriment of mortals, as Dickens overheard it, was therefore a beautiful, immemorial sign.

It was, of course, a sign which involved considerable reminiscence. The whole complex intellectual business which attempted to exploit what civilization there was left after the break-up of the middle-ages, found expression in the formula that man, as he had been developed under the shadow of Christendom and its classic inheritance, was a hopeless and unsavory mess. It was all quite as if some erratic Michaelangelo, with a passion for blossoming apple-trees, should suddenly make an angry attack upon a gardener whose snowballs were, to his mind, only trifling, fluffy things. So then, naturally enough, the first pattern displayed by the reformers was man wearing on his coat sleeve, as it were, the obvious marks of salvation—the aweful, lugubrious grandeur of one set apart from his neighbors for purposes of the next world. The entire frightfulness of this dream of men galvanized into a single attitude escaped detection at once—just as the gradual galvanization of American college men into salesmen is not widely no-

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ticed now. But while the dream lasted, the memory of God's carefully nourished human being faded considerably. Soon the effort to get rid of the Puritanical pattern (and of several other patterns just as bad, which cannot be enumerated here) expressed itself in a tremendous propaganda for a return to something earlier. This return, however, was not normally interested in Christendom. It asked for a clean slate, for a fresh human start. And, of course, it forgot all about what the start had really been like. There were no spiked cavemen's clubs in the romantic Arcady. Nothing was ever more unscientific than the theory of "life in nature" which went hand in hand with the growth of natural science.

In our own time, the pattern prevailingly suggested is considerably different in character. The Puritan face has been veiled, the romantic's dream has gone out of style. But a brand new model has appeared in turn—a model fairly well suggested by the image of a struggling and athletic swimmer. The lithe muscles battle the waters; their very weariness is triumphant and exhilarating. And so also the human fashion is to be in the current of things: man conceives of himself, first of all, as part of the cosmic tide out of which the ships of earth and stars have come; and then he plunges his being, by a strange, illogical corollary, into the surge called civilization. The law of energy is the favorite rule, and the expenditure of energy to win out over the flood is the only expression in which personality seeks satisfaction. All birth is seen as happening under the sign of the ape and the atom. All death is measured by surviving dividends and the echo of hushed huzzas. How such a process of galvanization can go on without men rising in mobs wrathfully to protest against it, is difficult to understand. It is the most appallingly evil of all the Procrustean beds upon which the Christian man has been asked to lie. The cheapness of its construction is evidenced by the very things upon which it prides itself in the way of ornament—its gewgaws and its glamour; the hollowness of its dreams is echoed by the feebleness of its waking smile. It is precisely what Scrooge was before Marley died.

That death, of course, though in its own way redemptive, derived its efficacy from an infinitely more significant birth. The transcendent Pattern of the race began to be visible as a child, in a manger round which were whispered august and moving words of comfort. And nothing so definitely characterizes the modern time as its failure to understand Him as a man—its failure to see that Divinity might very easily have overawed the world with a merciless revelation of splendor, but that It accomplished the incomparably more difficult thing of growing up with men. Because the essence of His effort was to be human, it is the ultimate definition of any faith that professes to follow Him that it should be human, too. And however dim such faith may be now in many places, it does survive universally in this season's festival. Here, at least once in the year, we are human—we scatter the simplicities of carols and greetings, of gifts and merriment, as if we had all suddenly emerged from a room of sleep or torture. It may be that the style of our celebration is somewhat marred. Perhaps the tremendous impetus given to marketing has its roots as much in commerce as in kindliness. But what there is left of charity is none the less surpassingly good.

It is good if only because it is a protest against the tyrant of our time—a revolution which bursts into explosive laughter. Naturally there have been many bitter and futile rebellions. It is curious to note that in the North, where the departure from man as he had been fashioned by Christendom was earliest and most marked, the outcry against the newer human patterns has also been the most gloomily violent. One thinks of Ibsen, fumbling in his Scandinavian darkness for the words with which to lash the hollowness of the engulfing commonplace, stirring some to reflection and driving others to despair. But he could not raise a single shout of joy, even though the history of his people was full to the brim of joy—particularly the older and peculiarly sacred history. The very word "mirth" is Scandinavian in origin. And Ibsen must have seen during his lifetime the whimsically attractive "star boys" who advertised the gayety of the season, and the "Lucia" who wears nine candles in her gleaming hair. These and the antique sacred silences out of which they came—silences of the Christmas night, across which folk hurried minster-ward through the snow—carried that in which Ibsen never dared to believe, a benediction in which there is also a hope. He had confidence in furious hate, in the intellect, in a curious variety of mysticism even; but he was fatally unable to realize the strength of the Eternal Child.

Fill the bowls high, and invite all to feel the warmth of charity and jubilation. Man, small as he is in the tumult of the universe, bent by sorrow and varied idiocies, regains through communal mirth the stature in which destiny found him good. It had never been intended that he climb over the walls of his own city, to veer toward Quixotic kingships of his own. As a child he was to be watched over lovingly at his work and play—during all the ridiculous pastimes he found tremendously important. His life as a constant mingling of tears and peals of laughter, of birth and death, of marriage and immaculate virginity, had that rich and moving greatness that is always to be found in preparation. Today it is extremely difficult to restore that concept, in the face of many phantoms and of hopelessness itself. But there is a mighty truth, which the Dickens with whom we began, must have divined. It is the truth that errant man differs in one important particular from the Child of Christmas night. There is always room for him in the inn.

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WEEK BY WEEK

THE close of the year, while not universally characterized by the peace which the season suggests, does bear hopeful indications that the strife inherent in our era of war is gradually being allayed. By agreeing to discontinue the control of Germany on January 31, the nations allied to enforce the Versailles Treaty threw into the discard a device which never worked and was necessarily the source of continued dangerous ill feeling. Incidentally, this agreement has the effect of strengthening three groups upon which the future peace of Europe seems largely dependent: Geneva, as the seat of the League and a place of meeting for national representatives; the French ministry, the stability of which lies in maintaining union between the foreign policy of Briand and the domestic program of Poincaré; and finally, the pacific and reconstructive action of the existing German government. When one remembers in this connection that Britain seems pledged to the affairs of the "dominions" rather than to continental politics, the value and importance of the League as a European institution and influence seems definitely assured. Herr Stresemann has expressed the belief that if the League had been in existence during 1914, the outbreak of the great war might have been averted. We are inclined to think he is entirely right. Historians are steadily coming round to a new estimate of the fatal year—an estimate which implies that, precisely because there existed no common "clearing house" where discussion might be attempted successfully, a Germany only relatively more belligerent than its neighbors was forced to act—and blunder in the dark.

MEANWHILE, the periphery of the Europe properly controlled by the League is cloudy and dangerously unsettled. The news of Roumanian intrigue, of Arab-Zionist conflict in the Near East, and of reaction in Hungary—to mention a few of the more striking contemporary disturbances—may sound a little like the introductory chapters in some wild romance of intrigue. But in the background there are actually all the elements of social chaos and upheaval. It becomes apparent that the larger peoples of Europe (that is, those which had achieved a genuine political organization prior to the war) have been able to rise superior to the troubles of twelve years because they could draw upon accumulated resources of solidarity. The newer and smaller nations, however, came into being during an epoch essentially anything but constructive in character. They have been influenced by the forces of disruption without having any fund of unity or experience to fall back upon. It seems increasingly clear that their present status cannot be considered permanent or even normal. Doubtless they will, in time, be saved by the removal of many inhibitions imposed by post-war treaties, quite in the same way as the abandonment of interallied control of Germany has lifted a great danger from the Rhine. At any rate, this hope is about the only possible resource available to the spectator who desires to remain optimistic.

ACCORDING to no less an authority than Mr. St. John Ervine, the Muse of History is a conscious ironist. She must be holding her shapely sides just now as she hearkens to the latest grievance which hard-pressed Protestantism is uttering before a world considerably less sympathetic to such things than it used to be. The plaint comes from Glasgow and concerns the large number of Irish immigrants who are crossing the narrow seas and seeking work in the old Pictish port. Being Hibernian, they are aggressive and persistent; being Catholic, the sort of civilization which Scotch Calvinism and industrialism between them have evolved (and which must be seen to be believed) does not tempt them. They form, we are told by the Manchester Guardian, "compact groups and they do not surrender their standards, fighting for them actively on municipal and educational councils." In short, having a country behind them that is now one of the commonwealth of nations, they refuse to accept the helotry and sour toleration of their faith that so many of their forefathers were forced to endure in the past, and in more countries than one.

THE deputation of Glasgow citizens that went to London to interview the Scottish secretary on the subject, and to devise ways and means whereby the Irish immigration into Scotland, which, we are told, is threatening "a veritable transformation of population," is to be met, may well hesitate when they regard the history of Irish-Scottish relations in retrospect.

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Three hundred years ago the shift of population was no less pronounced, but it happened to run west and south instead of east and north. The Scotch immigrants into Ulster did not come offering merely strong arms and willing hands, nor asking the bare justice of toleration for their religion. Behind them was the force of a Protestant government, which was using them to break a national resistance that had lasted three centuries. Before them was land to be cleared, not of trees, but of its legitimate owners, who were to betake themselves, in the picturesque phrase of a few years later, to "hell or Connaught." The Ulster settlement was the first of many disreputable experiments in British imperialism, and those who believe that any imperialism is, in the very nature of things, doomed to ultimate failure, cannot but be interested in seeing this one recoil by virtue of the very economic situation it helped to create.

OBVIOUSLY, the repudiation of prohibition in Ontario—as commented upon in these columns last week—is only relatively an object-lesson to the United States. It sets an example, but it says nothing about methods. Canadian law in the matter was only a sizable shrub which had merely to be yanked out; the Constitution is a tree which can grow but which cannot even be pruned. The Eighteenth Amendment, regardless of a probable majority desire, will abide with us. The Volstead Act supplies with memorable precision what the Constitution asks for, and enforcement officials are only the more or less loyal defenders of the Act. It is impossible to efface the second two without violating the first; and history as well as psychology demonstrates that the first will never be rooted out. What can be done? A very good answer is outlined by Mr. Walter Lippman in the December issue of Harper's Magazine. He argues that wet majorities in several states will employ nullification methods, the purpose of which "is to change the practical effect of the Eighteenth Amendment, even though its language remains the same." Remember, says Mr. Lippman, that in a great many instances where the letter of the Constitution ran counter to the public will or to current practice, relief has been sought through the sanction of the Supreme Court. The administration of Negro disenfranchisement in some parts of the South is the most notable example. Here the problem is handled through state laws which, though they clearly violate the constitutional dictum, have "not been declared unconstitutional," and which therefore function.

BUT there are many other instances, showing that the legal system actually in practice is finally dependent upon the will of the Supreme Court, which, in the words of Mr. Lippman, "is, thank heavens, composed on the whole, not of worshippers of a sacred text, but of jurists and statesmen and human beings." Let Wisconsin properly word a statute authorizing its citizens to use and sell certain forms of alcoholic beverages. Let other enlightened states follow suit, and the final result will be—as statesmen always wanted it to be—a regulation of the business of alcohol by the community affected. This solution is interesting, but one great obstacle stands in the way. While the Anti-Saloon League functions as a political organization, able to throw opinion solidly behind its propaganda, Congress will probably remain as unable to veer from strict enforcement as it has been in the past. The effect of this compact minority upon national legislation is vastly out of proportion to its numerical strength and moral significance. But there it sits, like the small boy armed with a hose who delayed a feminist procession. Two things might, accordingly, be tried. Citizens inclined to see in the present chaos of the prohibition movement a great danger to the general well-being might organize a vast league in opposition; or might authorize their representatives in Congress to remove Mr. Wayne Wheeler's cohorts out of Washington on the ground that they constitute a public nuisance. Upon sober reconsideration, the second action seems the best, because it is at once more speedy and more thoroughly in consonance with the enlightened public mind.

NOT more years ago than any middle-aged man can remember, presidential messages in this country attracted very little attention outside of it. Even in England, which, as the mother of Parliaments, might be expected to take a little interest in how big daughter was making out, interest was apt to be perfunctory. There were, of course, the mystifying paragraphs dealing with a domestic political situation which no fellow could be expected to understand. A little mild self-congratulation was not considered out of place. A few vague ethical remarks on the peace of the world at large were not resented, so long as it was recognized that providence, in its wisdom, had already provided for its safe-keeping by the senior branch of the family. Today, a presidential message to both houses is a very different matter. A whole number of things with which European interests are vitally and sometimes painfully concerned, are apt, vulgarly speaking, to be given the air. Evidences especially of a change of heart upon the painful subject of indebtedness are not likely to be overlooked by keen eyes and brains in London or Paris.

AN implied condition is that they shall be there. In the message by President Coolidge to Senate and Congress, reported recently, he will be either a very hopeful or a very imaginative man who discovers any. The document is rather noticeably bare of that fertilizing nitrogen which makes nipped illusions perk up and bloom anew. One imagines its reading was begun in a spirit of hope, proceeded in a spirit of resignation, and concluded in frank bad temper. Typical

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of this attitude, and the more noticeable because it comes from a friendly paper of liberal tincture, is the editorial quoted from the Daily Chronicle, and entitled The Happy Land. The writer, evidently a man of culture and classical education, envisages the American elder statesmen as Olympians, dwelling "above the storms and snow and thunder, impervious to mere human suffering." He asks, in a question that might be described as something less than oratorical, whether Mr. Coolidge, when he bestows praise upon the sacrifices now being made by pinched European nationals to meet their debt to this country, ever imagines that the effect of his words may be a decreased respect for a country which can pursue a debt-collecting course, without blushing for the surplus in its own coffers.

IN meeting this unpleasant implication, one may leave aside, for the moment, the fact that the function of the President, as Americans understand it, is not to bestow largesse, but to be the mouthpiece of those who are the appointed stewards of the national wealth, which remains the property of the people even after it has been levied in the shape of taxes, and is always returnable in the shape of relief therefrom. An observation far more germane to the ethical point involved in this whole matter of debt collecting, is that if America stands out as a contrast today in solvency and prosperity, it is precisely because she has denied herself the things for which Europe is paying through the nose. Bloated armies and navies, the pomp and circumstance of imperialism, the ceaseless territorial acquisition necessary to provide raw materials for manufacturing and executive jobs for a covenanted class, are luxuries that have to be paid for at one time or another. Even now, there is no sign of such a change on the part of the debtor's heart as might soften the creditor's. One other observation falls in order, and is called for by the general tone of British press comment on the Coolidge message. Irony is not an American trait. To find any trace of it in praise bestowed upon thrift applied to honoring obligations by one who happens to be rather a characteristic American, is to evince complete ignorance of American psychology. There is, to an American, no inherent difference in debt, qua debt, when it is contracted by an individual and when it is contracted by a nation. Nothing is misleading European statesmen at the present moment so much as the failure to understand this simple and direct point of view upon international obligations for whatever purpose incurred.

ENTHUSIASM over gold (meaning other people's) is not so general as it was in brave days when democratic conventions met at Omaha. For this, or other reasons, the alarm over the steady disappearance of the precious metal, voiced by Professor Gustav Cassel, of Stockholm, has not made the front page in any organ of the press we have seen, since it was uttered recently. Briefly, the professor's discovery is that, of all the gold mined, milled, melted, and molded since the discovery of the new world, a comparatively small proportion survives today in the shape of currency. To have recourse to figures that are as exact as they are satisfying, authorities of the United States Mint have calculated that, of four billion pounds of gold produced since the year 1500, two billion pounds is in vaults, somewhere or other, or passing to and fro, busied with what seems to be its natural function of creating financial crises in one country after another.

OF the residuary two billions, half is calculated (one wonders just how) to have gone into jewelry. The remaining billion has disappeared, some dramatically in the holds of sunken galleons and in the iron-bound chests of swarthy pirates, but the great bulk of it tamely enough at the hands of timid peasant folk unconvinced of the wisdom of government loans, who die (often violently) without revealing the cache. From the tone of Professor Cassel's article as reported, and from the nature of the remedies proposed to overcome this "hoarding instinct," we gather that the practice is on the increase. If so, the financial history of post-war Europe is its best excuse. When all the ills of the war period have been summed up, perhaps the most permanent will prove to be the shock administered to public confidence in governments as reliable stewards of the national wealth, and the conviction slowly and painfully acquired that, as the fruit of international operations over which none but a very small group of men have any control, the gold entrusted to government hands may turn (contra Midas-wise) into paper obligations of problematical value.

WE should like to call particular attention to the article contributed to this issue of The Commonweal by Doctor C. R. Morey, the Princeton professor of archaeology who has been entrusted with the exceptionally interesting and difficult task of cataloguing the treasures of the Museo Cristiano. It is obvious that the Vatican, in confiding the work to an American institution, was guided by circumstances which have recently modified the character of art scholarship. Europe is still the unrivaled treasury of masterpieces created by all the Christian ages; the United States, however, has made the most complete and accurate record of these treasures. Older critics, working without the aid of the extensive apparatus built up by financially unhampered American scholars, often assigned dates a century or two out of the way to paintings or carvings. Their estimates can now be rectified, and—which is the point of great interest to us—the rectification is made possible by the care and industry of students in the United States. Naturally enough, this achievement brings its reward. Such undertak[redacted] as the catalogue of the Museo Cristiano affords many Americans an opportunity to familiarize themselves

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with old-world art and culture in a way that would be impossible otherwise. Young students, especially, are enriched by positive, concrete knowledge of the things dealt with in their books. Finally, the effect must be to deepen the general interest in what may properly be termed the ages of Christendom—the years which were, as most of us are coming round to see, bright with faith as well as beauty.

IT seems pretty hard to believe that Mme. Schumann-Heink's present appearance in New York City marks her fiftieth anniversary as a singer. Her interpretation of certain great Wagnerian rôles is still the best, and the magnificent fulness of her voice is constantly a source of rapture. But undoubtedly nothing she has ever sung moved and thrilled so many people as the touching simplicity of her Stille Nacht. We have listened to phonographs rendering the song on warm July nights; and of course, Christmas would not be complete for many older-fashioned people if the great ballad (and the great voice) could not be "turned on." Few songs have identified themselves so completely with the favorite music of all the world. We were, therefore, very glad to see that the editor of Singing revived for the benefit of his readers, the history of the "Christmas masterpiece": "Like the melodies of Stephen Foster, the hymn was written by a man who was not ignorant of the fundamentals of musical art. It was composed by Franz Gruber, a Catholic church musician. He was a native of Hallein, in Upper Austria, near Salzburg, the birthplace of Mozart to whom the hymn has erroneously been ascribed. Gruber was born in 1787, and passed the seventy-eight years of his life as an organist and choirmaster in his native town. The hymn was, so to speak, a pièce d'occasion. It was written almost on the spur of the moment in 1818, in Oberndorf, near Salzburg. Joseph Mohr, an assistant priest, had planned a Christmas celebration and appealed to Gruber to set to music some lines he had penned. And the little carol was sung for the first time on Christmas Eve in the St. Nicola Pharrkirche of Oberndorf by a chorus of children's voices."

THE observed tendency of the worm to turn at a certain point in treatment, has not stopped neo-scientists from sticking pins in him for their own purposes. All the same, we hope the manly reply returned by one Columbia freshman to a questionnaire upon his intimate habits and complexes, will secure its abatement—at least during "bright college years." In the young man's own picturesque words, the custom of treating incoming classes "like rats for purposes of experimentation," has no warrant in sense or decency. Those who affect concern and mistrust at the relations between director and penitent, should be the first to see that [redacted]hat might be described as non-sacramental confession finds a speedy and unimpeded way to the discard where many educational fads and fancies await it.

BEING DONE GOOD

SOME twenty-five years ago, a book by a Brooklyn journalist entitled, Being Done Good, had a wide circulation. The writer, Edward B. Lent, was an invalid, who, through a long period of sickness, had retained a lively sense of humor. He had submitted to one special treatment after another in the hope that his sufferings might be relieved and in the end had arrived at the conclusion that he had been "done"—and done good. Nevertheless, he did not doubt the intentions of his would-be benefactors. Each meant well and each was convinced that his remedy—and his alone—could make the patient well.

Recently, one Branson C. Stimmell appeared in Special Sessions for sentence on a conviction of injuring property. It developed that the prisoner had torn down a poster in a street-car because he was of the opinion that posters interfered with the view of those traveling in these public conveyances and it was the duty of all who preferred to look at the back premises of East-Side tenements to pull them down. A probation officer had been ordered to make a report to the court before sentence was imposed and this is what he had to say:

"The defendant is a reformer with the usual mental twist that makes him think that everyone is wrong but him and once he forms an opinion, his mind closes and nothing can change it."

On the same day on which the newspapers recorded the fact that the court had suspended sentence on Stimmell with the suggestion that he devote himself to a study of how to mind his own business, there appeared elsewhere in these journals a despatch from Trenton, New Jersey, reporting a hearing at the State House on proposals to revise the Sunday "blue laws." At this hearing appeared the Reverend Firman A. Demaria of Asbury Park, who voiced his opposition to Sunday bathing. Now the reverend gentleman has as much right as any other individual to his opinion regarding either the sinfulness or the sinlessness of taking a dip in the ocean on the first day of the week. But it appeared that he was not content to hold his own opinion and guide his personal acts by the opinion he held. "I believe," he said, "that the life of every individual should be so barricaded that it would be easy to do right and difficult to do wrong." Therefore, he said, Sunday bathing should be forbidden by law.

The army of those who believe they are the only ones in the procession of life who are in step and that all can be brought into a correct "left-right" by Congressional enactments, is steadily growing.

Not all those who are "being done good" by these enthusiasts with the twisted mentality have the keen sense of humor of the invalid author of the once popular book. Recent indications show that even in Congress some of the sinners are becoming impatient under treatment, not to say resentful.

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A POET AMONG AMBASSADORS

By JULES-BOIS

THE poets are like the god Proteus in that they adjust themselves to all the manners of life. They may become government leaders, as did Lamartine, or diplomats after the pattern of Châteaubriand. Naturally this requires of individual poets that they be, not mere rhymers, but possess the wide beat of the eagle's wings and its high vision. Then no one will attribute to them a suavity after the manner of Machiavelli, which gilds the lie and travesties the truth. On the contrary, the world sees a glorious sincerity that develops between nations, not a courtesy purely verbal, but a sympathy generous and effectual.

Paul Claudel, the new ambassador whom Aristide Briand, a connoisseur of men, is sending to Washington, first took the examination for foreign service in the diplomatic corps at the age of twenty-one. Yet this brilliant début probably needed, I have good reason to suppose, support of his increasingly prominent muse, often an obstacle to a successful practical career.

When quite young, Paul Claudel spent a few years of apprenticeship in the consulates of Boston and New York, and so came to understand, during a formative age, the vivifying virtues of this country. It was, however, in the Far East that he proved himself a diplomat of the first rank. Through the punctual efficiency of his work, and his extraordinary gift of psychological penetration, he earned steady advancement. His reports to the Quai d'Orsay attested to a superior precision and correct documentation, and, by a "special diaphaneity of soul," to use Walter Pater's phrase, he knew how to see the present and foresee the future. Rumor has it that his book, La Connaissance de l'Est, served to place him before his government as the Frenchman best qualified to be ambassador in the Far East.

This great poet is a "diviner," a vates, as Carlyle puts it. Able to decipher the enigma of individualities, he is capable of exploring and reconnoitering the sensibilities of foreign countries, even the most mysterious and strange, such as Japan and China—which is real diplomacy. And in the crisis through which Asia is passing today, we need in Europe and in America, this kind of seer; for fleets and armies are inadequate to smooth out racial misunderstandings.

It is in virtue of this magical power of intuition that Paul Claudel fitly represents a large portion of the new France, and perhaps also the newer ways of thinking and feeling the world over. He is a striking example of creative spontaneity, which doffs the garb of schools, and casts off the fetters of narrow and unenlightened logic. He starts, so to speak, a fresh tradition. He is a beginning. When one studies Paul Claudel and his works, one can perhaps better realize why, some time ago, I declared in these columns that a distinguished litterateur like Anatole France is only a brilliant subordinate character, since he corresponds to the moment when the old wave dies. Paul Claudel is the wind that makes the new wave rise. In the realm of literature and art, men live by creation, not by imitation. Paul Claudel is great, thanks to qualities essentially opposite to those characterizing Monsieur Bergeret. He has attempted something which has no counterpart in the past. In style and in ideas, Anatole France has done no more than rearrange Voltaire and Renan. Claudel has his origin in himself. One may like or dislike his aesthetics, but no one can deny his originality, his strength, his contribution to the literary history of his time.

The first time I met Paul Claudel in Paris, at Lêon Bailly's, the publisher of the Librairie de l'Art Indépendant, Tête d'Or, and La Ville were fresh from the press. We all welcomed Claudel's work at once as a unique and rare creation, despite the protests of the Philistines. The Librairie de l'Art Indépendant has never made money, no doubt because it published the first writings of a generation that was trying to find itself. Still the artists it sponsored were, for the most part, full of promise which they later fulfilled. Among them were literary men like Maeterlinck, Henry de Régnier, André Gide, and Paul Adam. Paul Claudel appeared at Bailly's with the éclat of a meteor.

Since then, the author of Tête d'Or, though elevating and purifying himself, has remained loyal to his principles. He incarnates the French ideal of simple grandeur, of dignity without arrogance, of lyricism that weds the human to the superhuman. There is something proud and pure, magnetic and irreconcilable with commonplaces and vulgarities in the books and plays that followed Tête d'Or; for example, that poignant tragedy, L'Annonce Faite à Marie, which marks an epoch in French literature; L'Otage; Le Repos du Septième Jour; Feuilles de Saints; Cinq Grandes Odes; Le Pain Dur. The highest problems of life, of death and destiny, the intensity of the passions transcended by grace, the century-old soul of France fashioned by her saints and her martyrs, the miracle of faith, that renewal of the whole being resulting from conversion, that something in the French maiden which is so angelical and so delicately human—in short, the true voice of the people which only the aristocracy of genius understands and interprets—these in my opinion characterize especially the many-sided lifework of Claudel, master of our language and ideas.

He was a boy during those troubling and troubled times which accompanied the fall of the Second Empire and the establishment of the Third Republic. The

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Frenchmen who in 1889 were twenty years old and had a distinct vocation, were marked, if I dare say so, with a fatidical sign. They were born in mourning, later witnessed a smiling period of civilization, and finally suffered from frightful upheavals, as much in the life of the spirit as in that of society. Is it astonishing then, if, beset by doubt, sorrow, disillusionment, they sought to cling to something stable? In the cosmic cataclysm compelling them to question everything anew, they have turned their eyes and hearts toward Christ and His kingdom.

Thus, from the human point of view, that rebirth of mysticism, that return to religion, that blazing forth of Catholicism in the art, literature and thought of France is explained. Therein was found a principle of energy when everything else crumbled. Newcomers, sometimes they were not of least importance, joined the army of veterans. Thus Psichari, the "lily of the trenches," died like his elder comrade Péguy, with the name of Christ on his lips. This movement of heroic Christianity has nothing of the superficial or pedantic. It is utterly spontaneous.

Neither Péguy with his Jeanne d'Arc, nor Claudel with his L'Annonce Faite à Marie, has sought to gain disciples; on the contrary, knowing that "the spirit bloweth where it listeth," they taught the youth who came to them, not to imitate them, but to find themselves, to be themselves. There have been converts who had already behind them an important literary achievement. Such is not the case of Claudel. It was Catholicism that revealed his genius to him, as he acknowledges in Ma Conversion. And perhaps were it not for this Catholicism which illumined and reassembled his dispersions, his too rich nature would have been lost in its own opulence. But so he climbed to spirituality, though keeping his feet on the ground. This mystic is sound, robust, well-rooted in his French province, l'Aisne; in his native village, Villeneuve-sur-Fère, in Tardenois. He repudiates the divorce between the flesh and the spirit, which is called jansénisme in Europe and puritanism in America. He proclaims jubilantly: "I am a thousand times more certain of the existence of God than of the sun which shines upon us." But he believes also in the sun. All his work is, as M. Georges Duhamel has said, a pilgrimage toward God, yet treading through the roadways of the earth.

Nevertheless, one quickly distinguishes a poet wholly intellectual like Rostand, from a poet aflame with the divine, like Claudel. In my career as dramatic author and critic, two memorable Paris premières stand out —Cyrano, and L'Annonce Faite à Marie. By the one, we were exalted by the heroic ardor of affection for the homeland; by the other, which is an equally enthusiastic homage to France, our patriotism was transfigured into a religious rapture. Summing up Claudel's teaching, we may say that reason beguiles, that chimerical fancy dazzles in vain, but the spirit urges us to peace. Then we perceive that beauty is only a path to lead higher. Tramping our pride in the dust, even our intellectual pride, we endeavor to rise to humility, and to understand why, in a letter to Jacques Rivière, the Christian poet has formulated this avowal: "Art is only a pale counterfeit of sanctity."

THE CHRIST-CHILD IN OLD ENGLAND

By DOLORES BENARDETE

THE idea that there are no child characters in middle-English literature may possibly occur to those not steeped in the study and spirit of the middle-ages. Indeed, many people are under the impression that the only manuscripts of the period (that is, between about 1100 and 1500) in which children are even mentioned or referred to, are frankly pedagogical or didactic, like The Babees Book. But works of this nature are few in comparison with the mass of material left us in the English vernacular of the middle-ages. It is in the great bulk of generally readable writings that one finds children of all kinds, figuratively running and playing through the pages.

But history amply supports the view that the child was a very insignificant member of pre-renaissance society. Regarded by his elders as a potential, if as yet inactive, adult, he seemed to differ but slightly from his mother and father, uncles and aunts. That he should have a world of interests separated from the world of his parents was inconceivable. That his personality should require special care and study to insure its unblemished blossoming was a dream not yet dreamed. To the man of the middle-ages, his child was only a reduced facsimile of himself—nothing more than an homunculus. Most of the child characters in the literature of the period are therefore inane.

Broadly speaking, there are two general types of children in middle-English literature—the lay or ordinary children, and the holy children. Most of the holy children are destined to sainthood. The childhood of the saints is invariably idealized to correspond to the mediaeval vagary of what saints ought to be as children. There is a tendency to explain exceptional qualities in the lives of the saints by extending them retroactively to their childhood days, so that the child saints are very often immature only in years, having fully developed faculties and powers to perform all sorts of astonishing feats.

On the contrary, the life of the Christ-child as depicted in mediaeval literature, is vitalized and elevated

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far beyond the vapidity of the child saint; and of all the holy children written of at this period, it is He who offers the greatest variety of material. He is described; He is allegorized; He is the central figure in many a tale; He is a part of the background of the stories of His mother Mary.

In Three Kings of Cologne appears a prosaic account of what the Holy Babe looked like to the Magi:

> Oure Lord Ihesu Crist was that tyme in His manhede a litil childe of xiii dayes age, and He was sumdele fatte; and He laye wrapped in poure clothis and in His modir lappe.
>
> (Our Lord Jesus Christ was at that time in His manhood a little child of thirteen days of age, and He was somewhat fat; and He lay wrapped in poor clothes in His mother's lap.)

The fragment, La Estorie del Evangelie, gives a report of the birth of Jesus:

> Whon that Child was forth brouht,
> Luytel heo hedde othur riht nouht
> fforte leggen inne that Bern,
> But a luyte hei othur vern;
> Heo wounden Him with that heo mihten gete,
> And leyden Him, there bestes ete.
> Heo leyden Him in bestes stalles,
> I-loke bi-twene two olde walles.
>
> (When that Child was brought forth
> She had little or almost nothing
> Wherein to lay that Bairn,
> But a little green hay;
> She wrapped Him with whatever she could get,
> And laid Him where beasts ate.
> She laid Him in the beasts' stalls,
> Locked between two old walls.)

The ballad Saint Stephen and Herod celebrates the birth of Christ in the refrain: "Ther is a Chyld in Bedlem born is beter than we alle." A portent of His advent follows the challenge of sceptical Herod:

> "That is al so soth, Stevyn, al so soth, iwys,
> As this capoun crowe xal that lyth here in myn dysh."
> That word was not so sone seyd, that word in that halle,
> The capoun crew "Cristus natus est!" among the lordes alle.
>
> ("That is all as true, Stephen, all as true, certainly,
> As if this capon should crow that lies here in my dish."
> No sooner was that word spoken, that word in that hall,
> Than the capon crowed "Christ is born!" among the lords all.)

There are many alleged experiences of the childhood of Jesus in middle-English literature. His uncanny control over wild beasts is narrated in The Childhood of Jesus. Mary is frightened as she and her Son go through unfamiliar paths:

> . . . than began here soryn newe.
> Mary seyd: "this bestes xullyn us slon.
> Alas, the day waxit so dim!"
> Jhesu blyssyd tho bestes ichon:
> Mary blyssyd here Sone anone,
> She dred no best in the way,
> She seyde here kar was al gon.
>
> (. . . then began her sorrow anew.
> Mary said: "These beasts will slay us.
> Alas, the day grows so dark!"
> Jesus blessed the beasts every one.
> Mary blessed her Son anon,
> She feared no beast in the way,
> She said her care was all gone.)

The Holy Child's superiority over other children is manifested in many ways. One day, the little playmates of Jesus decide to run a race to the well.

> Alle hee lokyddyn, I you say,
> qvych of hem wasi most snelle . . .
> Jhesu fyrst the water hent.
>
> (They all looked, I tell you,
> To see which of them was quickest . . .
> Jesus reached the water first.)

Among the boys is Arka, who breaks the Leader's vessel spitefully. Jesus, unperturbed, "hol Hys pot gan make." Then He proposes a pretty game:

> "Wyl we pleyn be the lake?
> On the sunebem xul our pottes gon?"
> On the sunebem thei hem honge.
> Cristes heng stylle, here gan don falle;
> alle thei brokyn, he were not stronge.
>
> ("Shall we play by the lake?
> Let our vessels hang on a sunbeam?"
> On a sunbeam they hung them.
> Christ's hung still, theirs fell down;
> They all broke, they were not strong.)

Not only can Jesus mend broken jars and rest His own vessel safely on a sunbeam, but He excels His fellows in brilliance. Like other boys, He is sent to school, and proceeds to give His teacher a lesson in metaphysics, asking him why "a" comes before "b." The teacher is unable to answer, and Jesus informs him, "wtoutyn lecyng" (without lying):

> "A is letter wtoutyn pere,
> A is III & but o thyng,
> III partys he hat knyth in fere.
> But A begynnyt the letterure,
> For A is lyk to the Trinite . . .
> I wyl the lere, yyf thou wylt dure:
> A is lyk to the Deyte:
> the Deyte is, thou myth be sure,
> III personys & on in mageste,
> Evermore hereafter he xullyn endure
> Indepartable alle III."
>
> ("A is letter without peer,
> A is three and but one thing,
> Three parts it hath knit together.
> But A begins the alphabet,
> For A is like to the Trinity. . . .

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I will thee teach, if thou wilt hear:
A is like to the Deity:
The Deity is, thou mayst be sure,
Three Persons and One in majesty,
Evermore, hereafter, They shall endure
Inseparable all three.")

This aspect of the young Christ preaching the Gospel is common to many of the loveliest lyrics. The method is usually that of the debate, a popular form in the middle-ages. Similar dialogues between mother and Child occur in ballads, but their sweetness and charm are not so apparent as in the little lyrics. In the lullabies, they take on the softness of a crooning voice and therefore seem less dogmatic. In one of these, the mother tells her Child He will be King.

"But nevertheles
I wyl not ses
To syng, by by, lullay."
The Chyld than spak in Hys talkyng, and to His moder sayd:
"I bekydde am Kyng in crybbe thar I be layd.
For aungeiles brygt
Done to Me lygt,
Thou knowest it ys no nay;
And of that sygt
Thou mayst be lygt
To syng, by by, lullay."

("But nevertheless
I will not cease
To sing, by by, lullay."
The Child then spoke in His talking, and to His mother said:
"I am announced King in the crib where I am laid.
For angels bright
Make Me light,
Thou knowest it is no nay;
And at that sight
You may be light
To sing, by by, lullay.")

And how He should be taken care of and made happy, He says, as many infants must long to say:

"My der moder, whan tym it be, thou take Me up on loft,
And set Me upon thi kne, and handyll Me full soft.
And in thi arme
Thou hyl Me warme,
And kepe nygt and day;
If I wepe,
And may not slepe,
Thou syng, by by, lullay."

("My dear mother, when the time comes, take Me up on high,
And set Me upon thy knee, and handle Me carefully.
And in thy arm
Hold Me warm,
And keep Me night and day;
If I weep,
And cannot sleep,
Sing, by by, lullay.")

In another lyric, the Baby has the greater part:

"I may not slep, but I may wepe,
I am so wo begone;
Slep I old, butt I am colde,
And clothys have I none . . .
A spere so scharp shall perse My herte,
For dedys that I have done.
Fader of grace, wher Thou hase
Forgetyn Thy lytyll Sonne?"

("I cannot sleep, but I may weep,
I am so woe begone;
Sleep I would, but I am cold,
And clothes have I none . . .
A spear so sharp shall pierce My heart,
For deeds that I have done.
Father of grace, why hast Thou
Forgotten Thy little Son?")

In the legend of "how an holy hermyt prayde a synful woman pray God for hym" (how a holy hermit begged a sinful woman to pray to God for him) the Babe is used to set off His mother's kindness of heart. The harlot enters a chapel of Our Lady where stands an image of the Virgin and Child. While praying for the hermit, she imagines she overhears a conversation between Jesus and Mary. Jesus says:

"Moder, seostou hou yond neih hend
Myn enemy preyeth for My frend?"

("Mother, seest thou how near at hand
My enemy prayeth for My friend?")

Mary answers her Son's remark "wyth wordus mylde, plat and pleyn" (with words mild, quiet, and plain) that for the sake of His friend, His enemy should be forgiven. Her gentle remonstrance inspires the Child to say:

"Mi swete modur, Mi norice dere,
thi bone mot nedes I-graunted be,
Wot thou wolt wol I not werne the."

("My sweet mother, My nurse dear,
Thy boon must needs granted be,
What thou wilt, I will not hold from thee.")

Middle-English literature is rich in accounts of Christ. One thing stands out in this material: the Christ-child is human, He is alive. Although He is gifted with supernatural powers, He talks and behaves like any other boy. He likes to play with His friends, and is at the same time a comfort and a problem to His mother. It may be argued that the soul of Christ is hidden under a mass of mortal weakness, but no one can deny that the very vitality and alertness of the Holy Child as a literary creation places Him far above the marionette-like children who parade through the rest of the literature of the middle-ages.

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QUALITY STREET

By CONDÉ B. PALLEN

IT CAME back to me in a dream after a lapse of more than half a century. I won't say precisely, for that would be to confess to more years than I am willing to proclaim to an unsympathetic world.

So let an indefinite half century, which the poet tells us is better than a cycle of Cathay, stand for that bright backward and fulness of time which has sped under the bridge between the actuality of that far distant experience of boyhood, and its recurrence in a dream tryst. It was an exquisite dream—a dream that urges one to sing with another sentimental poet, "If this be dreaming, let me dream again." But the wish to dream doesn't bring the dream after the heart's desire, unless one be a Peter Ibbetsen, who had only to lie down with hands under his head, and crossed feet, to pass through the portals of sleep into the magic of dreamland to the idyllic companionship of his beloved.

Why I should have dreamed, after so long an interval, of what I call Quality Street, to use an epithet from the vocabulary of the household darky of the ancient Southland, by which he distinguished with subtle prescience between the aristocracy of his world and the commonality, I do not know; for it goes clean against a pet theory of mine that a dream is always suggested by some incident in the humdrum of the twenty-four hours preceding it. A word, a look, a gesture, a strain of music, or a revived memory impinges, even for only a fleeting and unobserved instant, upon the delicate intricacy of this human compound, and lo! out of the profundity of slumber, a vast kaleidoscope of fantastic vision is evoked and accepted as actuality to the mind's eye. Any sober relation to space and time is blotted out, and the dreaming soul dwells in the eerie region of make-believe in contented credulity. Be that as it may, I could find no connecting link in the near present to account suggestively for my dream. Fifty years were spanned in less time than Puck puts his girdle around the earth—and I was once more a child amid the wonders of Quality Street.

Now Quality Street was a real street in "auld lang syne." It ran at right angles to the street I lived on. It was not Quality Street, at least to me, until some two blocks away from the intersection. When I say Quality Street, I do not mean Fashion Street, or rather Fashion Place, just one street back of our house. Fashion Place took up some four blocks of imposing mansions which the plutocracy of the day displayed in clamorous architecture to the bewildered eyes of citizens who no doubt envied while they criticized. No, Quality Street was not that kind of street. Its homes were not pretentious, but in my childish eyes, they possessed quality—as indeed did the whole street, whose dwellers seemed to me the haut ton of assured aristocracy with a halo of romance.

Quality Street ran for some six blocks from the corner where stood our parish church, to the sharp incline which falls away to the valley below where dwelt humbler folk and where the railroad flung its ribbed ribbon of steel westward to the far and perilous land of Indians and adventure. It is only as I look back with maturer mind that I see what then was only a vague wonder in the heart of a child. I know now what then I only felt—but felt with a subtle intuition out of the uncomprehending innocence of childhood, for the wonder and glamour of life were about me "trailing clouds of glory," which have since greyed under the sombre touch of soberer years. The world then was all magic, fresh and eternally young, and made for me. I inherited the earth and the beauty thereof. The day was all sunshine and the night the myriad brightness of the constant stars. Time was not, for eternity abides. Everything about me seemed permanent. Change was beyond my untutored vision. Care, sorrow, responsibility, lay slumbering and inert in the cocoon of time to come. I was in Eden, and knew nothing of the land that lay out beyond the gates.

I cannot recall when first I wandered along the shaded thoroughfare of Quality Street with its double row of spreading maples. It seems to me that I knew it always; and indeed, by some strange haunting of the spirit, it is still as it always was, though I am well aware—for it was only recently that, prompted by my dream, I visited it in the flesh—that time has physically eaten it up and left an empty husk. While I realized that it had changed, that its soul had fled and that I was gazing on death (for its houses are old and dilapidated and decayed, and a frayed humanity in keeping with their ruined estate now dwells in them) it was somehow inexplicably Quality Street still—the street that I loved in the pristine wonder of life, linked imperishably with my soul, and in spite of the evidence of physical sight, abiding in the beauty and loveliness and charm of those who went in and out over its thresholds when I was yet in the garden of Eden. As I trod its ancient pavements with plodding feet—how different when my feet were winged with unalloyed joy a half century ago—and paused here and there at some familiar spot, memory engulfed me in its benignant flood, and I was again a child under the spell of its charm.

Yes, that is Colonel Fortier coming down the street with sedate pace, in high, white hat with its curved brim, and in his closely buttoned frock-coat, his flowing

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bow-cravat almost hiding his stock, gravely swinging his gold-headed ebony cane, looking neither to the right nor to the left—an upright and severely contained soldierly figure. His grey moustache is waxed to an exquisite point. He does not notice the child who stands gazing at him in hushed awe as he passes (it is said that he had once fought a duel and killed his man!) He wends his way in dignified ambulation as far as the great, red brick house with its many-paned windows, where Mam'selle Isbelle Garnier lives, and there pauses—for Mam'selle Isbelle herself is coming down the lawn.

The Colonel stops and lifts his high hat with a sweeping flourish to his waist, his ebony cane in his left hand, in salutation to the exquisite demoiselle who greets him with a sweet smile, as she stands there with her gloved hand on the half-opened gate. She is very beautiful, a princess of romance, slender and tall, with a wealth of sun-kissed hair, big blue eyes like bits of the sky—indeed, a veritable goddess to the child who stands watching, though in those days he has never heard of goddesses. She smiles sweetly in greeting the Colonel—but the child thinks there is an ineffable sadness in her smile, for he has heard his elders talk, and Mam'selle's lover has gone away and never returned. She is rich and he is poor, and he is gone to find a fortune, for he is too proud to wed her without a fortune to match hers, and it has been a very long time now. The Colonel gallantly raises her hand to his lips and then holds it, patting it gently and says something which the child cannot overhear. Mam'selle smiles her sad, sweet smile again and nods her beautiful head with a suspicion of tears in her sky-blue eyes; and the Colonel, with another stately bow, places his high, white hat back on his head and goes up the street through the flecked sunlight under the maple trees.

Mam'selle Isbelle stands gazing a moment, and then turns dreaming down the street in the other direction. A great and heroic resolution surges in the heart of the boy to go seek Mam'selle's lover for her, when he gets big enough, down the great river whose tawny, turbulent flood sweeps past his city to far-off New Orleans, and out into the vast Gulf beyond, where perhaps Monsieur Louis, for that is his name, has been captured by pirates and languishes in loneliness, marooned like Robinson Crusoe upon some uninhabited island very far away. It would be a wonderful and stirring adventure, thinks the boy, whose imagination is crowded with the pictured scene. First, however, he will stop at Bloody Island just below the city in the river, where all the duels are fought, and where no doubt the Colonel had killed his man.

The boy walks up the street, a little way behind Mam'selle Isbelle, in the elation of his stirring resolution, and strongly tempted to tell Mam'selle Isbelle about it, until he comes to the Colombier house, where he stops and leans against the iron picket-fence and whistles for his friend Edmond, of his own age, and the youngest of the innumerable Colombier brood. For Quality Street knows nothing of eugenics in the garden of Eden, and considers a big family a big blessing. And there on the lawn, in a softly-cushioned chair under the magnolia tree pink with abundant blossoms, sits Edmond's little crippled sister, with her poor little withered legs but with very big bright eyes, beckoning the boy and smiling eagerly. The boy goes to her and says good morning, for he is very sorry for little Yvonne, and she takes his hand in hers and holds it claspingly and tells the boy that Edmond has gone down the street. The boy stands much embarrassed with little Yvonne clasping his hand and looking up into his face, for he knows she wants him to stay with her a bit, and he is eager to hasten off in search of Edmond. But little Yvonne's big eyes are so wistful, and though she doesn't ask him in words to stay, the boy hasn't the heart to go. So he stays, and little Yvonne holds his hand in both of hers in happy gratitude, something which the boy doesn't understand at the time, but understands quite well now, and is thankful in his soul that he did not, with the impetuous selfishness of the child, break away from helpless little Yvonne in search of Edmond. O slender incident of the long ago, how beautifully and sweetly you still bloom after half a century in this ancient heart, when the setting of its scene has crumbled into dust! Yes, we dwell in time, but abide in eternity.

On the other side of the hedge, between the Colombier's lawn and next door, Madame la Comtesse de Chateaugai, a fragrant survival of the old régime, whose father had come from France at the time of the Revolution, moves about among her flowers, a silken shawl about her fragile shoulders, and a bit of point Valenciennes—the boy, of course, doesn't know its name—delicately resting on her silver hair. Presently she comes to the hedge with a bouquet of flowers gathered from her garden, and beckons the boy to bring them to little Yvonne, and Yvonne cries out, "Merci, Madame la Comtesse," and blows kisses with both hands to Madame, and Madame blows kisses back; and Yvonne takes a flower, and with her big, black, bright eyes smiling up at him—Yvonne's eyes are very big and very bright—hands it to the boy who bows his best childish bow to the little lady, after the manner of Colonel Fortier—for that is ever the way with Quality Street, courtesy and remembrance always—and thanks her.

It is rarely after nightfall that the boy comes to Quality Street, but it chances one evening he is there with a great, yellow moon shining through the maple leaves and weaving a golden checkered pattern on the sidewalks. There are lights in the houses on either side, but there is a great illumination in the Villacour house, every window streaming a yellow flood on the lawn in front, and festoons of colored lanterns swinging between the columns of the great porch. Monsieur

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et Madame Villacour are giving a coming-out party for their youngest daughter, and all Quality Street and others besides, are there. It happens that the boy's parents are among the guests, and this gives him the opportunity to slip out and surreptitiously come to Quality Street. So he steals onto the lawn in the shadow of the shrubbery and rapturously gazes at the gay scene inside. Laughter and the murmur of voices float out into the golden night with streams of music from Xarpe's famous orchestra.

Through the French windows, the boy sees the graceful figures of smiling dancers weaving the gracious paces of the minuet, as Xarpe's violins flood the scene with stately cadences, to which kings and queens and princesses and chevaliers across the seas had so often, in the long ago, tripped in restrained measures. This the boy does not know, but somehow feels as his ravished eyes watch the ladies sweep to the ground in profound courtesy, and the gentlemen bend in cavalier-like obeisance in response, all in perfect rhythm which beats in the boy's blood—the grace of noble motion wedded to perfect music. It sinks into his soul never to pass away. It is the perfect symbol of Quality Street, the grace and rhythm of life—elegant, smiling, happy, courteous, polished and restrained.

Then the vision of memory faded and I stood in a drab street whose glory has long departed, and turned my leaden footsteps elsewhere.

It is only in a dream tryst, in the mystical chambers of sleep, that I shall ever see it again—if indeed it come again, as in that dream tryst I mentioned in the beginning, when Quality Street was once again Quality Street, and yet something more than memory. I was again a little boy in Quality Street. There was a strange diffused light along the whole street which came not from the sun or any luminary in the heavens. It was neither day nor night, yet everything was distinct with a crystal clearness. I went along the street, but I wasn't walking. I seemed to float along without effort. There was a curious palpitating rhythm in the air like the cadence of the minuet—though I heard no sound. As I glided along, I met Colonel Fortier, very sprightly in his manner, and he seemed to be gliding as I was. He looked at me and nodded and smiled, all the old austerity gone. Presently Edmond and little Yvonne came along, and little Yvonne was no longer lame, but on a sturdy pair of straight legs. They were hand in hand, smiling at each other, and it seemed to me, were speaking of me—although I did not know what they were saying. And then Yvonne left Edmond and came up to me, and her eyes were bigger and brighter than ever, and she carried a great bouquet of white roses luminous in their whiteness. One of these she took from the bouquet and handed it to me with a smile that was radiantly beautiful—and then the strange, quiet music which I seemed only to feel, grew in intensity.

We were just in front of Mam'selle Isbelle's house, and Colonel Fortier and Edmond and Yvonne were gazing intently toward it. Presently the door opened and out came Mam'selle Isbelle on the arm of a handsome young man, and she was looking rapturously up into his face and he down into hers—for though she was tall for a woman, he was a very tall man. The Colonel and Edmond and Yvonne nodded in turn, smiling to me. I was very happy and had not the least sense of strangeness about it. It was as it should be, and as I had resolved it would be—for this was surely Mam'selle Isbelle's lost lover. Colonel Fortier leading, with Mam'selle Isbelle and the tall young man following arm in arm, and Edmond and Yvonne and myself hand in hand behind them, moved down the street to the Villacour house.

The house was beautifully illuminated with the same sort of light that was diffused around us, but streaming from its windows in an intenser glow. From the house came the music that heretofore I had only felt, but now audible as if played on golden viols, soft and full and exceedingly sweet. Then out of the door came all of Quality Street, to the rhythm of the minuet, ever gaining in volume and sweetness, and as they passed us, greeting and smiling (they seemed especially to be greeting me) we joined in with them and moved, gliding, down the street in rhythmical procession to the top of the incline into the valley. Strange to say, although it did not seem strange at all to me then, they did not go down into the valley, but glided straight over to the top of the hill beyond where there was a great light, like an aurora borealis shooting up to the heavens. I don't know why, but I alone remained behind. Something held me back, though I ardently strove to glide over with the others. Yvonne waved to me and smiled, and threw a rose back toward me, which fell floating down into the valley. I stood watching them with aching heart as the music died away, and the light of the heavens on the other side faded out. I was alone—at the end of Quality Street.

Just as I have a pet theory of what suggests dreams, so I have another pet theory of what dreams—not all dreams—are made on. I only hint it here in a phrase I have already used; we live in time, but the soul abides in eternity. Time is not of the soul—only the body knows vicissitude. In my dream, my body was not awake, but my soul was; and the soul of Quality Street which has never died, looked eye to eye with my soul in that timeless duration which we call eternity—in the phrase of the old schoolmen, sub specie eternitatis. I wonder if my dream tryst in Quality Street was not perhaps an adventure on the fringe of the other world—and if Colonel Fortier and Mam'selle Isbelle and Edmond and Yvonne did not really greet me on the mystical shore where the ebbing waves of time beat themselves away on the invisible coast of eternity.

Or was it only a bit of an old man's fancy? Perhaps.

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PRINCETON INDEXES VATICAN ART

By C. R. MOREY

IT IS refreshing to note, in these days of international recrimination when political and financial misunderstandings seem to compose the materia of our foreign relations so far as Europe is concerned, that the real or fancied distrust so loudly voiced by our politicians on both sides of the Atlantic finds no echo in the scholar's study. The authorities of the Vatican Library have recently demonstrated the solidarity that exists between the scholarship of Europe and America, by assigning to the latter the task of preparing the catalogue of the valuable collection of objects of the minor arts of the Christian epoch which has long been known and prized by students of mediaeval art under the name of the Museo Cristiano.

The assignment of a Vatican catalogue to American scholars is a departure in European practice which throws interesting light on the development of research in the history of art in our country in recent years. It still remains true, and will doubtless so remain for many years, that Europe possesses, in individuals, the richer scholarship; in her libraries, the most inaccessible books; and in her museums, the most valuable material for comparative study. But certain centres in the United States have amassed so much of photographic apparatus, and have built up special libraries so convenient for workers, that it is actually possible at the present moment to do the research inherent in the preparation of such a catalogue as that of the Museo Cristiano more conveniently and perhaps more effectively in New York or Cambridge or Princeton, than in Rome, Paris, London, or Berlin.

There exists at Princeton a unique instrument for research in mediaeval art which has been in process of compilation for years, and has now become indispensable for the thorough classification of mediaeval objects. It is called the Index of Christian Art, and has for its object the cataloguing of all works of figurative art down to the year 1400, and of their subjects and relative bibliographies as well. Years of work have finally made it practically complete for the early mediaeval period.

The Museo Cristiano is not so well known to the visitors of the Vatican as are the other collections of that vast palace. In fact, the visitor usually enters the Vatican galleries by climbing the steps into the museums of sculpture, and only rarely turns to the right in the entrance lobby, to go down the long corridor of the wing which Pius IV built along the western or garden side of the Cortile del Belvedere. Doing so, he finds himself in the precincts of the Biblioteca Apostolica, since 1600 the extensive abode of the great Vatican Library, for which also was built, under Sixtus V, the wing that cuts across the Cortile del Belvedere to unite Pius IV's building with the wing of Julius II. The precious collection of 50,000 manuscripts for which the library is famous, used to be kept in the little cupboards which one sees along the lower walls of the corridor of Pius IV. Since the reign of Pius X they have been installed in more modern fashion in fire-proof vaults convenient to the study rooms which are situated in the transverse wing of Sixtus V mentioned above.

The manuscripts of the Vatican Library are famous the world over; less known is its other collection of treasures, which the casual visitor sometimes hardly notices as he "does" the gallery of Pius IV. On the other hand, scholars who study the art of the middle-ages know it well as perhaps the most interesting assemblage of mediaeval minor arts to be found in any museum of Europe—hardly rivaled by the Carrand collection in the National Museum of Florence, or by the more imposing but hardly so valuable series which is installed in the Hôtel de Cluny at Paris.

The Museo Cristiano, as the little museum is called, occupies a single room in the long gallery. It commenced by acquisitions of private collections nearly two hundred years ago; for a century and a half its growth was slow and its reputation limited, until Pius IX moved it into a rank of first importance by the simple means of giving it its choice of the objects found during the excavation of the Catacombs of Rome. Partly from these excavations, and partly from the Buonarroti, Chigi, and Vettori collections, the museum became the possessor of a very large, unique series of vetri d'oro—fragments of glass dishes adorned with a design in gold leaf imprisoned between films of glass, with which the humbler of the early Christians, lacking means perhaps with which to purchase inscribed gravestones, marked for identification the resting-places of their dead in the underground cemeteries of Rome. Other museums, such as our own Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, own a few of these objects; the Museo Cristiano has over a hundred of the most varied character.

In 1905, another acquisition was made which still further increased the importance of the collection. In that year the altar of the chapel of the Sancta Sanctorum was opened, and after recognition of the relics it contained, the objects of art which served as containers of these relics, or had otherwise found their way into this ancient repository of sacred treasure, were transferred to the Museo Cristiano. They were carefully catalogued at the time by the Jesuit, Grisar, and the librarian, Lauer, of the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, and it is no fault of these scholars if the new discoveries in Christian archaeology, and the new

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orientation of the study of early mediaeval art, should have modified so completely our point of view during the years that immediately succeeded the publication of their catalogues of the Sancta Sanctorum treasures, as to necessitate an entire review of their work and a reclassification of the extraordinary objects that were found in the cypress chest of Leo III.

The existence, under the altar of the Sancta Sanctorum, of this cypress chest, had been known for hundreds of years; the existing lists of the relics it contained go back to the thirteenth century. The chapel in which the altar stands is, in fact, the only existing portion of the old Lateran palace of the Popes which was demolished in the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries. The famous Scala Santa which forms at present the access to the chapel, was placed in its present position by Sixtus V. The chapel itself was dedicated to Saint Lawrence, and the name of Sancta Sanctorum was originally applied only to the altar and its contents—the most revered set of relics, perhaps, that the middle-ages knew. Leo III (795-816) inclosed them in the famous cypress chest, inscribing thereon the brief record: Leo Indignus Tertius Episcopus Dei Famulus Fecit. By the time of Innocent III (1198-1216) the treasure already had its name of Sancta Sanctorum. He further protected the chest with bronze doors which close the opening of the altar in which the chest rested, and added to its contents the relics which had been acquired since the time of Leo III. The box of relics is not the chapel's only claim to distinction, for it houses as well the miraculous image of the Saviour known as the "Acheiropoeta," whose history can be traced as far back as Pope Stephen II (752-757) who carried the image in procession from the chapel of Saint Lawrence to the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, at a time when Rome was threatened with a Lombard invasion. I saw the same image traversing Rome in 1925, during one of the solemnities of the Holy Year, followed by a throng of pedestrians and a host of automobiles.

Chief among the reliquaries which were found in the cypress chest of Leo III, and are now in the Museo Cristiano, is a gold and enameled cross (figure 3) which served as container for a fragment of the true Cross—an extremely ancient work of its kind, since there is good reason to believe that it is the same cross reliquary which Pope Sergius discovered in old Saint Peter's in the seventh century. It may well be the one mentioned in the Book of the Popes as having been presented to the basilica by Pope Symmachus (498-514). At any rate, it appears to be our earliest specimen of that species of mediaeval Christian enamel known as cloisonné. Its hollow back still contains the dessicated remains of the layer of balsam which covered the relic. In the five panels of its front, the craftsman has quaintly imagined in the stenographic style of his period the scenes which the mediaeval sculptors used to call the "infancies of Jesus"—the Annunciation to Mary, the Visitation (Mary and Elizabeth) the Journey to Bethlehem, the Birth of the Saviour, the Adoration of the Three Magi, and the Presentation of the Christ-Child in the Temple. The Baptism in Jordan ends the series and opens the narrative anew with the Ministry of Christ.

The enumeration of the treasures of the Sancta Sanctorum would carry one beyond the limits of this article; the list includes another cross set with jewels that was the legendary receptacle of the relic known as the praeputium Domini; silver caskets of unique importance in the history of mediaeval silver-work; an ivory casket made in Alexandria in the fifth or sixth century; some extraordinary textiles with woven figures and scenes, mostly from the looms of the East and occasionally displaying Christian subjects; and certain painted wooden boxes which also served as reliquaries. One of these has a cover decorated with the only certain piece of Palestinian panel-painting of the early Christian period which we possess. The painting appears on the inside of the cover, which is of the sliding variety, and depicts in five panels the Crucifixion, the scene of Easter Morn, the Ascension, the Nativity, and the Baptism. Evidently the scenes have reference to the holy places visited by the early pilgrims to the Terra Sancta, since Golgotha, the Holy Sepulchre, the Mount of Olives, Bethlehem, and Jordan are the places listed in the earliest pilgrim's itinerary which we possess—that of the Pilgrim of Bordeaux of the fourth century.

The paintings were done about the year 600, and the box was one of those receptacles sold to the pilgrims to the Holy Land for convenience in carrying their souvenirs, since inside it we find pieces of wood and stone, imbedded in some amalgam of resin and sand, on which is inscribed the provenience of the relics—"from the life-giving place of the Resurrection," etc.

Even without this unique series of objects that have come from the Sancta Sanctorum, the collection of the Museo Cristiano would be of first importance. It includes an excellent series of the enamels which made the city of Limoges in the south of France a famous centre of this branch of art from the twelfth century to the sixteenth (figure 4). It has, naturally, a very fine set of liturgical implements of all periods—chalices and patens which range in provenience from England to Italy and the Byzantine East; ostensoria of all types; a curious Abyssinian processional cross which holds its own surprisingly well with the imposing crosses of mediaeval Europe; flagella of bronze which seem to have served penitential uses; bronze and terra-cotta lamps of unusual quality; ivory and enameled book-covers, among which is the famous book-cover of Lorsch (figure 1) which was made by some Carolingian workman after an Alexandrian model; a striking series of devotional plaques and triptychs ranging from the Slavic to a beautiful group

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of Gothic ivories of the fourteenth century (figure 2). Of this important collection no catalogue exists. Giovanni Battista De Rossi, the founder of the science of early Christian archaeology, had commenced one before his death in 1894, and had reached the point of a manuscript inventory which is now preserved in the Vatican Library and must serve as starting-point for any further work of the sort. It would have taxed even the supreme competence of a De Rossi to classify properly all the objects of the Museo Cristiano, so varied is their character, and so wide the space of time (from the third to the eighteenth century) over which their dates of production are scattered. It is a task for a group, rather than for a single scholar.

The Vatican Library has assigned the task to the writer of this article and his colleagues of the Department of Art and Archaeology at Princeton University, with the invaluable assistance of the staff of the library itself, and especially of S. E. Pio Franchi de'Cavalieri, Bali of the Knights of Malta, and the most accomplished hagiologist in Italy. The coöperation reflected in the arrangements for the catalogue bears witness to the breadth of vision animating the direction of the Vatican Library, and to the happy facility with which objects of pure scholarship achieve an international modus operandi.

THE CHRISTMAS PUDDING

By CARL HOLLIDAY

HOW long man has considered pudding a Christmas necessity, would be hard to calculate. English tradition says that old King Arthur had one made for his Round Table, and his recipe is still on record:

"A bag pudding the King would make
And stuffed it well with plums;
And in it put great lumps of fat
As big as my two thumbs."

At even an earlier date, the priests of the early Christian Church told the congregation that the pudding was a symbol or emblem of the offering brought to the Christ Child in the manger by the Wise Men from the East—and through all the centuries that have passed since then, this triumph of baking has been celebrated in song and story. Chaucer, the fourteenth-century poet, speaks in his Canterbury Tales of a cook's prowess in making puddings and sauce therefor; in Shakespeare's day the references to the Christmas pudding are innumerable; in the seventeenth-century folk-tales and ballads you may smell its savory odors. Well might Sir Walter Scott declare that "England was Merry England then."

What went into these famous puddings of the olden days? Well, at the present price of food, most housewives would stand aghast at the ingredients. Thus, in 1770, one was made at Newcastle, England, which contained the following articles: Two bushels of flour, twenty pounds of butter, four geese, two turkeys, four wild ducks, two woodcocks, six snipe, four partridges, two neat's tongues, two curlews, seven blackbirds, and six pigeons. A goodly mixture, indeed!

This astounding and deadly conglomeration was nine feet in circumference and weighed twelve stone, or about one hundred and sixty-eight pounds! No wonder that we unfortunate descendants of our forefathers are afflicted with indigestion. It is well that the peasants, gathered in front of the castles, sang the reassuring Christmas carol:

"God rest you, merry gentlemen;
Let nothing you dismay."

We should remember that it was the custom in early England to eat the pudding before anything else was served at the Christmas banquet, and to this day some English families persist in eating their pudding first. When, therefore, the British tell you to come at "pudding time," they do not mean to invite you to the coffee-and-cigar end of the dinner, but to the whole menu.

The old-time pudding was served with great pomp and ceremony. It, and the startling boar's head, with cherry eyes and sugar teeth, were brought in on immense silver platters, garlanded with holly and all aflame with burning brandy. Loud were the cheers that rang forth at this imposing spectacle. Generally the great pudding was molded into the shape of the jolly head of Old King Cole, or Santa Claus—a custom that is followed to this day in ancient Osborne House on the Isle of Wight.

Our Pilgrim ancestors had their doubts about pudding—and well they might. But still the Puritan housewife occasionally made one. Those were indeed pious times; for

"'Twas in those days an honest grace would hold
Till a hot pudding grew at heart a-cold;
And men had better stomachs at religion
Than I to capon, turkey-cock, or pigeon;
When honest sisters met to pray, not prate,
About their own, and not their neighbors' state."

Ungodly extravagance would never have been borne under such conditions, and the saintly wife, who then really did "love, honor, and obey" her "goodman," invented a simple pudding that was tasty, healthful, and above all—a success financially! On Christmas Eve, she deftly mixed some milk, bread-crumbs, butter, salt, eggs, sugar, and raisins; and the next day when she brought the savory pudding before her lord and master he doubtless had inner qualms lest his heart—and stomach—should incline too much toward the good things of this world. That day is forever past, but it is to be hoped we shall never let that pudding pass away. It is cheap and certainly effectual; it has filling capacity that is positively marvelous.

Some modern physiologists have declared plum pudding the insidious foe of man's welfare. Heed them not—they are as tinkling cymbals and sounding brass. You may measure a nation's vitality by its plum puddings. Whenever a national stomach can no longer digest a pudding, that race is doomed; it is becoming effete; its resisting and absorbing capacities are fast ebbing away. Let no man trust such a nation, for in the hour of trial it will fall; its foundations are not built upon that solid rock of human strength—the Christmas pudding!

(Due to limitations of space in this issue of The Commonweal, several important communications have been omitted. Publication of these will follow shortly.—The Editors.)

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CHRISTMAS CHANTS OF LATIN LANDS

TRANSLATED BY THOMAS WALSH

The Gloria

O Glorious Lady of the Light
  Whose rays all other stars eclipse!
'Twas thine to give thy breast-milk white
  To thy Creator's lips!

What Eve's sad penalties had cost
  Thy fertile womb in full would pay;
To exiles mid the star-paths lost
  Thy Heavenly Window lights the way.

Thou Threshold of the Highest King—
  Thou Gateway of a noontide flame!
In her, Life's virgin heralding,
  O ye, redeemed, acclaim!

Glory, Thou Sovereign Lord to Thee
  Whom spotless birth to earth did lend—
Father and Holy Spirit, Three—
  Through ages without end!

From the Latin of
SAINT ANTHONY OF PADUA (1195-1231).

Cantiga

White and crimson, cheek and breast—
  O Virgin Blest!
The pledge of love in Bethlehem,
A flower was on the rose-tree's stem,
  O Virgin Blest!
In Bethlehem in sign of love
The rose-branch raised a rose Above,
  O Virgin Blest!
And in the rose came forth a flower,
Jesus, our high Lord of Power—
  O Virgin Blest!
  The Rose of all the rose-tree's span,
God in nature and a Man—
  O Virgin Blest!

From the Portuguese of
GIL VICENTE (1470-1540).

Chant of the Ninth Seraphim

Joy is everywhere on earth;
  Gladness throughout Limbo waking;
Feasts in honor of the birth
  Of Maria they are making.
Sorrow can no haven find;
  Noon's without a cloud attended,
For today doth humankind
  Hail the Son of God descended
Virgin body to assume,
  Our salvation to restore,
Wiping out the stains and gloom
  With the power of Love once more!

From the Spanish of
FRAY ÍNIGO DE MENDOZA (1482).

The Lullaby

As through the palms ye wander,
  O Angels of the Blest,
Bend down the branches yonder
  To shield my Darling's rest.

O palm-trees stirred and shaken
  By every breath that blows,
Lest Bethlehem awaken
  Sway lightly for repose.

Soft sleep serenely squander
  From out your dreamy breast;
Bend down the branches yonder
  To shield my Darling's rest.

The heavenly Babe is weary
  And droops His forehead there;
His tears for earth so dreary
  Have dimmed His eyes with care.

Ah, let His young brows ponder;
  Come, ease His heart distressed;
Bend down the branches yonder
  To shield my Darling's rest.

Ye bitter frosts, congealing
  The dampness of the night,
Let me, from chill concealing,
  Caress and warm Him tight.

Weave your embraces fonder,
  O Angels of the Blest!
Bend down the branches yonder
  To shield my Darling's rest.

From the Spanish of
LOPE DE VEGA CARPIO (1562-1635).

Bethlehem Carol

The land grew bright in a single flower—
  One great Carnation rare—
Against Whose bloom no frost had power
  To dim Its glowing there.

Oh, was there ever such another
  So lovely for our lips to kiss—
To shine where earthly shadows smother—
  A bud of heaven, like This?

The sun behind the mists is clouded;
  Haste, shepherds, there to gaze;
See Fire itself in ice beshrouded,
  And Ice in joy ablaze!

From the Spanish of
SISTER FRANCISCA JOSEFA DEL CASTILLO (1671-1743).

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CARROLL CLUB CHRISTMAS

IN Los Pastores, the Mexican folk-play which the dramatic classes of the Carroll Club of New York are presenting during the Christmas season, the shepherds and their women folk who come to adore the new-born Babe bring each a separate and distinct offering to the Holy Rose, His Mother. So, in their plans for a fitting celebration of the anniversary of the Great Birthday, each of the several groups in the unique Catholic club for girls that is giving the entertainment, has its own program for sharing with others the joys of Christmastide. Thus, on Saturday, December 18, members of the physical education department were hostesses to hundreds of children. On the following day, the Social Committee entertained a Big Sisters' group of neighborhood children. The Mary Carroll Guild and the Glee Club will join on December 26 to bring joy to many others who will come from the different parishes. The junior members will bring their gift to the Crib on December 28 by making the birth of the Saviour a happy remembrance to still other young ones.

Even the singing of Christmas carols from the balcony of the club-house at 120 Madison Avenue, which has become a feature attracting ever-increasing audiences, will be carried to the shut-ins by the Glee Club; for, at the conclusion of the program at headquarters, the singers will speed to the Veterans' Hospital at Kingsbridge Road and Sedgwick Avenue, where the dozen numbers will be repeated.

The analogy between portions of the old Spanish miracle play and the attitude of the members of the club which is presenting it might be carried further. As the shepherds approaching the Holy Babe are more fervent than formal in the expressions of their love, so the Carroll Club girls seek to void all of their efforts on behalf of their guests of every tinge of formality. It is a rule at Christmas time that any group invited may provide its own program if it so desires. Sometimes it does, as in the case of the colored scout troop which preferred to make fun rather than have fun made for it. Even now there is laughter at the club when memories are recalled of the dusky little damsel with the Sis Hopkins curls who urged dancers of the Charleston and clog experts to wilder and more extraordinary efforts, the while with rolling eyes and teeth agleam she sought the approval of the audience.

And as the shepherds were in some cases hard put to it to find gifts for the Wonderful Visitor, so there was at least one occasion when girls of the club had unexpected visitors who put them to strange shifts that none should be sent empty away. Announcement had been made in a daily newspaper two years ago that the Carroll Club would entertain "groups from orphanages" on a certain day, but the names of the orphanages invited were not given. A dear little nun, seeing opportunity to furnish her charges with a real Christmas entertainment arrived on the scene at the hour specified with an extra contingent of considerable size. If there was momentary consternation on the part of those in charge of the festivities the little Sister never knew it. The orphans were heartily welcomed, and while the regular entertainment proceeded half a dozen of the girls descended on the ten-cent stores for presents, while others went from room to room of the resident members collecting handkerchiefs, beads, ribbons, and whatnot to load an extra gift bag.

It is the homely gift of two pieces of ribbon, by the way, that the little boy Lisardo offers in the miracle play, while Tulio, having naught else, presents his lute to the Blessed Mother, so that "should Jesus cry, why sound the strings and straight He'll smile."

The plan of the Carroll Club, founded in 1919 by Mrs. Nicholas F. Brady for Catholic girls, is that the members, like this same Tulio, shall "caper before the Infant God, strike up—and after, pray." The promotion of sociability, friendship and good health are announced as the main purposes of an organization which also shall "provide recreation, education and good times for the Catholic girls of New York."

It would be difficult for any Catholic girl in New York not to have good times at the Carroll Club. Housed in one of the finest specimens of colonial architecture in New York, designed by Stanford White and decorated by Elsie de Wolfe, it contains swimming pool, indoor tennis court, ballroom, restaurant, library and spacious lounge, sun parlor, rooms for recreation as well as for educational classes and meetings of committees and, for those who remember after to pray, a beautiful little chapel.

While education is provided, it is not necessary to membership that a girl shall enroll in any of the classes. For that matter, she need not engage actively in any of the sports if she is not so inclined; she is in exactly the position of, say, a member of the New York Athletic Club, who may make use of the facilities for athletic or gymnastic diversion which his club affords or use it to lounge, to read, or to meet his friends. But the recreational offerings of the Carroll Club are so diverse that nearly every member is affiliated with at least one special group and many with several. Those who are not attracted by tennis or horseback riding or hockey, may find their good times in membership in the Outdoor Club which arranges week-end hikes and occasional skating parties. If inclination does not pull toward these forms of exercise and if the basketball and baseball games in the gymnasium fail to appeal, there are dancing circles and bridge courses, not to speak of membership in the Glee Club, which may better suit the taste. Finally, for those who can find good times only in serving others, there is the Mary Carroll Guild for social service and religious activities. In this connection it may be mentioned that the religious qualifications for membership in the Carroll Club are of the simplest. One need not be enrolled in the Children of Mary or be active in some sodality in order to become eligible; a letter of recommendation from any priest attached to the parish of the applicant is all that is required.

One of the features of Carroll Club life which deserves special mention is the course in liturgical music, conducted under the Justine Ward Method by representatives of the Pius X School of Music of Manhattanville College every Wednesday evening.

Membership in the club carries with it the privilege of joining any of the athletic or recreational classes in which instruction is given, or any of the educational courses, at one-half the price charged to non-members. For in addition to some 1,200 non-resident members and 40 resident members, the Carroll Club offers its courses to those of other faiths, and several hundred non-Catholics willingly pay the full rates to obtain the advantages offered.

Age limits for membership are from 18 to 35 years, but a junior department provides for the needs of girls from 12 to 18, and this department has its own swimming, dancing and gymnasium classes, with other special attractions.

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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

Mme. Sorel in Camille

CECILE SOREL is one of the institutions of the Paris stage and a particular luminary of the Comédie Française. The Shuberts have brought her to New York with Louis Ravet, also of the Comédie, and an excellent group of French actors for a brief repertory season of notable plays in French. This is a creditable undertaking, and one which affords New York a unique opportunity to compare the technique of the most traditional of French theatres with our own productions.

In La Dame Aux Camélias, better known to American audiences as Camille, by Alexandre Dumas the younger, Mme. Sorel has that chance beloved of all actresses to run the full gamut of emotion, pathos and the thin edge of sentimentality. The play itself is by no means a great one. But it is undoubtedly an excellent vehicle for one actress bent on showing the range of her powers, and Mme. Sorel loses none of her golden opportunities. She is—let it be said in all charity—no longer young, and it is no little tribute to the perfection of her art that after the first few minutes one forgets this fact completely. She conveys the emotions of youth with an art that is impeccable within its own carefully limited intentions. And there are many moments during the play when her personal magnetism establishes a very definite and powerful illusion of reality.

Yet—the truth must be told that the qualities of exaggeration which are part of the accepted convention of the older school of French acting fall a little heavily in a day when the opposite extreme of restraint has become the law on our own stage. It is probable that American audiences would find even more to acclaim in the work of another Comédie artist, Mme. Pierat. I happened to see the latter last winter in a play of Paul Geraldy's, Robert et Marianne, and there were moments when her smouldering restraint attained a power which Mme. Sorel's acting in Camille never touched. It is only the rare genius of a generation who can afford the utter luxury of abandon by filling what are otherwise empty gestures with a volcanic force. Mme. Sorel is not such a genius.

In the first place, her voice has strict limitations. It is often shrill and unpleasant. In the death scene of the last act, it became not so much feeble as infantile—always a voice under perfect control and obedient to her least wish, yet without subtlety of range. Mme. Sorel's best moments are in pantomime or when she lets loose a tornado of emotion.

Of the production as a whole, one felt that it was a curious combination of lavishness in certain details with a shabby second-rateness in others. There was nothing of the least interest in the stage setting or lightings. The supper party of the first act was an example of the worst possible direction—particularly when M. Gerval as the sprightly Rieux quite forgot that he was singing a comic song for his fellow guests, turned his back on them, and sang it directly at the audience in the most approved musical comedy style. Such a breaking of the illusion of the play is inexcusable. Two dancers in the fourth act were permitted the same liberty with precisely the same result. And then, too, Mme. Sorel's own costumes, and many of the draperies and properties were in conspicuous contrast with the shabbiness of the scenery and the conventional lighting arrangements. In sum, an interesting evening, but not a very exciting one, except for the delight of exquisite diction and the innate beauty of the French lines spoken as only the artists of the Comédie can speak them.

The Constant Wife

THE return of Ethel Barrymore from Shakespeare to a modern drawing-room holds no small intrinsic interest—above all, when it is a return to comedy. Her present vehicle, a play by Somerset Maugham, gives her many of those opportunities which, by right of early conquest, are properly her own—individual scenes in which she is incomparable, moments in which she can make the raising of an eyebrow tell far more than pages of dialogue, or convey secrets to the audience with all the delicacy of a telepathic message. But unless you are enamored of the Barrymore voice, you cannot but regret the moments when it rises to a chanting key and seems to come anywhere but from the heart.

Here and now, however, it is time to part company with the critics who find unconscionable delight in the curiously old-fashioned sophistication of the play itself. Old-fashioned—because there is much talk about the economic independence of women, about the evil of being a "parasite," and other stock material of the early Shaw period or reminiscent of the days when woman suffrage thought it had to find economic justification. Sophistication—because the sympathies of the comedy are led toward a wife who takes her husband's infidelity with such great unconcern that she can find no better answer to it than a corresponding infidelity of her own, once she has established her "economic independence" by going into business and paying her own board. In other words, it offers the most trite and threadbare of all answers to the "double standard" problem—which is to abolish all standards whatsoever. The engaging and ironic title springs from the fact that the wife insists on remaining constantly a wife and on returning to her nonplussed husband at the conclusion of her avowed infidelity. It is this quite exact example of "making the punishment fit the crime" which has sent the sophisticates into howls of glee. It is, they tell us, a most "civilized" thought. A clever fellow, this Somerset Maugham! The only trouble with the laughter he provokes is that it is freighted with halitosis—itself another symptom, perhaps, of the onward march of civilization.

The Constant Nymph

STILL another "constant" play, based, of course, on the novel of the same name by Margaret Kennedy, and dramatized by the author and Basil Dean, the present director and co-producer with George Tyler. There is, however, a sincerity in the writing of this tragedy which puts it in a vastly different category from the Maugham play of similar name. It has, as a tragedy, one essential weakness—namely that the death of Teresa Sanger comes from a purely accidental cause, a valvular lesion of the heart, and has no relation whatever to the theme of the play itself. It is simply the heavy hand of the author bringing to a convenient if pathetic close a life that was born to frustration and sorrow.

The chief merit of the play, up to this point, is its tender delineation of character. Teresa is a wild and intense bit of

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humanity, brought up under conditions that leave little to guide her in her moment of crisis, and plunged headlong into a situation where her final impulsive decision is the almost inevitable outcome of what has gone before. That this child-woman should continue to love the musician who can never appreciate her, even after he marries an utterly unsuitable woman, and decide at last to run away with him as the only means of saving him from his own mistake, may seem, in one sense, forced. But her devotion is of the utterly reckless kind, not unmixed with a groping for honor and truth. To the end, one knows that her decision is costing her life blood. She is giving in to impulse, but not trying to justify it. Which lends no little meaning to the last words of her lover as she dies in his arms—when he cries, "She is saved!"

But we might add that the author herself is saved—saved by an arbitrary trick from telling the further tragedy which Teresa's life would have held, the tragedy of discovering the worthlessness of the man she loved, and the futility of the sacrifice of her own instinct of honor, which shines so luminously for a moment in the second act when she tells Lewis Dodd that he must remain with his wife. As it now stands, the play builds toward overwhelming sympathy for a grave mistake, and ends abruptly with the author's only solution for an impasse. This is where it strikes a false note. It is neither a tragedy of renunciation—which would have been superb—nor a tragedy of atonement, which the logic of life would have demanded from the premises. It is a tragedy of accident, which is not really a tragedy at all, but simply a play with a sad ending, an incomplete cycle, artificial, and so lacking the touch of greatness or inexorable moral truth by the inability of the author to solve the problem she had created. It is a play whose ending gives it false values, morally, realistically and dramatically.

Basil Dean has directed his complicated cast with consummate skill and fine feeling. The Teresa of Beatrix Thompson is a rare bit of honest artistry. It would be difficult anywhere to find a more perfect example of expert casting than in the twenty-four characters of this play. What a fine and piercing tragedy it might so easily have been!

First Love

FAY BAINTER is having a rollicking time (on the stage, of course) as the mistress who becomes a wife in Zoe Akins's adaptation of a French play by Louis Verneuil. It is all very old stuff, as false to the true values of life as most French farces, and quite as overburdened with sentimentality. It is never very clear just why Jean, the out-of-favor son of the Count de Varigny, and his little Roumanian friend should not have married long before the play starts, since, unlike Somerset Maugham's characters, they have every intention of remaining constant and do so remain. But Mr. Verneuil probably needed a plot, and so decided to picture the primitive and innocent bliss of these young things under circumstances which should allow Jean's father to play the heavy villain and repent of his severity only at the last curtain. And so the evening drags on through interminable plot complications to a foreordained conclusion.

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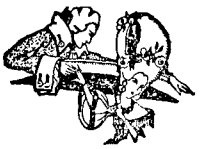

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BOOKS

Can We Then Believe?, by Charles Gore. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.00.

THE present volume by the former bishop of Oxford is a summary of his three well-known books—Belief in God, Belief in Christ, and The Holy Spirit and the Church—written after considering various criticisms, and supplemented with a number of lengthy notes. Six of the seven chapters represent the White Lectures given in St. Paul's Cathedral in London in the Lent of 1926, and the seventh is an essay on the Relations of Religion, Theology, and Philosophy.

The venerable Anglican theologian presents an eloquent and well-knit appeal in favor of the claims of historic Christianity. The Christian hope, he observes, is based on certain convictions about God, on emphatic belief in His personality and on the realization of His immanence, though this is regarded as secondary to His transcendence. God's purpose in creation is wholly good, but the free creatures which He made rebelled against Him. God in the person of His Son became Man for their redemption, and was thus the fountain-head of a new humanity. One day God's judgment of weal or woe to all free and responsible spirits will be revealed. It is in the light of this eternal destiny "that men are to labor here and now for the kingdom of God, assured of the ultimate fulfilment of the divine purpose, of which they have received the foretaste especially in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

This is the New Testament's thought of God, leaving out for a moment its implicit recognition of God as Trinity. In a very beautiful passage, Dr. Gore describes this general doctrine as at once humbling and glorious to man, mysterious yet luminous in practice, ridding man of foolish optimism and of despair. The doctrine was proclaimed, he continues, not as a series of conclusions from mere reason, but as the authoritative word of God. It implies moreover a far more practical aim from that of the philosophers. Yet Saint Paul or the other first Christian teachers were far from demanding a blind faith. They appealed for evidence to miracles, prophecies, and the conscience of mankind.

Can the modern world believe in this or, indeed, in any authoritative revelation? In answering affirmatively the author refers to science as dependent on man's instinctive faith in the regularity and order of nature. Why should not his universal instinctive religiousness be also a "valid ground of practical certainty"? Besides being religious, large portions of mankind have believed themselves to be recipients of revelations. Among the revelations the Judaeo-Christian is of unique continuity and has a unique culmination. Unless one's mind is blocked by the "assumption that God, who does everything in general, can do nothing in particular"—a brilliant characterization of rationalistic prejudices, be it said—there is overwhelming evidence for the fact that God revealed Himself through the Jews and finally and universally in the Son of Man.

What about the alleged opposition of science? Dr. Gore faces the question by declaring that the Church must not interfere with science as, according to him, she has frequently attempted to do. Science, on the other hand, has no right to deny the possibility of miracles which, as is effectively pointed out, are closely connected with the fact of free will in man. "If we believe in God it is surely impossible not to read back into God this quality of freedom in such higher sense as would leave man His image and not His superior." Certain special difficulties in regard to biblical cosmogony are then dealt with and the fact that we still speak of the sun rising and setting is emphasized in a manner reminiscent of Leo XIII's remarks on the same subject. Such articles of the Creed as the miraculous birth and corporal resurrection of Our Lord, "events in recent years solidly witnessed to," have a different claim to be literally accepted than the words concerning "the right hand of God" and the "descent into Hades." The point is well made against the modernists' charge of inconsistency. As to man's origin, Genesis aims to teach that God created all things and that sin, not matter, is the source of evil, but Adam and Eve—and here the Catholic apologist must part company with Dr. Gore—are not to be looked on as historic individuals but as "Everyman." Science, moreover, should recognize man's mental and moral distinction from the lower animals and its consequent inability to connect him with them, or to say how man's unique characteristics emerged from the brute.

The possibility of miracles cannot be denied by sound principles of historical criticism any more than by science, unless the former is to exceed its legitimate boundaries. Such criticism has no business dictating what can or cannot occur, but should consider with an open mind the evidence as to what did. The testimony of an eminent rationalist, Eduard Meyer, is cited as expressing disgust with the prejudiced character of much rationalist criticism, and as emphasizing the trustworthiness and authenticity of Mark, Luke, the Acts, and most of the Pauline Epistles. The last named, though not explicitly mentioning the virginal conception of Christ, give us the rest of the Apostles' Creed and anticipate the clauses of the Nicene. Doubtless Saint Paul laid down the lines of the Church's theology, but did he invent his teaching in regard to Christ as the object of worship? No, the Church accepted it because it is at least implicitly taught by Mark and Luke, who show every sign of being faithful recorders. If our minds are open to the idea of Redemption we shall find these narratives convincing.

Does the idea of a visible Church, "continuous with the old and now apostate Israel," so clearly taught by Saint Paul and the Acts, go back to Christ? If Paul invented it, does it come from the pagan mysteries? In answering these questions the author notes that Luke, in the early parts of the Acts and in his Gospel, does not show Saint Paul's developed theology of the Incarnation. The fact creates a strong presumption as to his exact portrayal of primitive doctrine. Luke, however, does represent the Twelve as the rulers of the Christian community and as requiring baptism and the laying on of hands. How could these conditions have prevailed apart from Christ's commands? As to the Eucharistic "breaking of bread," its sacramental character presupposes in Paul the idea of the Church. Its ascription to Christ is supported by Mark and Matthew, and the combined testimonies "render it historically certain that Our Lord deliberately organized His disciples as the 'Church' and bound them together in obedience to the Twelve as their appointed rulers and by sacraments of His foundation." Also, the Gospels frequently show Christ's conception of His disciples as "the old Israel reformed on a new basis," under the stewardship of carefully selected Apostles. In regard to sacrificial worship as well as to the law of conduct, Christ came, not to destroy, but to fulfil.

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Though the pagan mysteries no doubt helped to create an atmosphere favorable to Christianity, Christian sacramentalism, deeply spiritual and ethical, cannot be shown to owe any of its original elements to paganism, on whose mysteries Saint Paul looked with horror. Nor can a sacramentalism so intimately related to conversion and faith be plausibly connected with magical ideas.

Such is the outline of Dr. Gore's apologetic argument. It is by no means completely satisfactory, viewed from the standpoint of Catholic philosophy and theology. Its appraisal of the value of rational theism and of historic evidence is, for instance, insufficient. Its rejection of the historic character of our first parents is an unjustifiable concession to modernism. Its whole treatment of grace and the supernatural sphere is excessively vague. In the notes, Dr. Gore discusses his well-known views on the kenosis or "self-emptying" of the Son of God involved in the Incarnation, in a manner that leaves much to be desired. In his treatment of the Real Presence he can offer no satisfactory substitute for the Catholic doctrine which he is unwilling to accept in its fulness. His errors as a whole are involved in his characteristically Anglican failure to deal with the problem of the Church's authority at the present day and to accept the doctrinal developments that have taken place since primitive times. Though he emphatically endorses the idea of doctrinal authority in the primitive Church, though he defends the later adoption of philosophic terms in the struggles against heresy, and rightly concludes that the modernists propose "not really a mere change of terms, but a change of idea," he can say of the later Church that it has at times "proved so false in its general and official witness that men have revolted from it altogether."

What has become of the ecclesiastical authority instituted by Christ? By what standard are we to distinguish between doctrinal developments as legitimate as those of the fourth century on the one hand, and exaggerations, corruptions, and mere views of individual theologians on the other? How—and the question is perhaps the most important of all—can the early Church, one in discipline, doctrine and authority, according to Dr. Gore's own conclusions, be said to subsist in a "Catholic Church" whose members are not in communion with one another? In the present volume Dr. Gore does not attempt to answer these all important questions. No doubt he did so, though to what extent the present reviewer is unable to say, in The Holy Spirit and the Church. Yet it is obvious to a Catholic that the impossibility of answering the questions satisfactorily is inherent in the Anglican position.

It is pleasanter, however, to dwell on the merits of the book than on its defects and in this respect Dr. Gore is to be congratulated on his masterly grasp of many important truths and on his eloquent and persuasive presentation of them. At the risk, moreover, of seeming impertinent, the reviewer cannot close without expressing his profound admiration for the author's deep attachment to the Incarnate Saviour, his profound and humble piety, his genuinely Christian courtesy toward those from whom he differs. A book which expounds with such effectiveness so much of Catholic truth, and which is permeated by so beautiful a spirit as that of Dr. Gore, is capable of helping many inquirers toward the City of God, in which its errors will be corrected and its defects supplied. Would that its author might realize that the fulness of historic Christianity is not yet his!

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Charles the First, by Charles Wheeler Coit. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. $5.00.

Mr. Charles, King of England, by John Drinkwater. New York: George H. Doran Company. $5.00.

THE distinction between Roundhead and Cavalier is one that does not run, despite the accidents of history, along political or even religious lines. It is temperamental and deeply rooted in the antinomies of human nature. To treat the contrast as its importance deserves would take a book of a good many pages. But nearly everyone is aware of and can recognize the characteristics of the two states of mind. Compass and measure, an intense respect for law, even to the extent of seeking legal countenance for very lawless deeds, balance and foresight, a great outward decorum, a coldness to undue ardors—all the virtues associated with the stability of worldly enterprises, continue to be characteristics of the Roundhead 300 years after the name was given him to mark a political and social fissure. Enthusiasm, personal devotion, a preference for men over measures, a refusal to be impressed by the apparatus of the law or to seek its sanctions where personal ends are in question, a certain disorderliness in his best actions and a certain generosity in his worst, still distinguish the Cavalier, though thirty decades have passed since his love-locks were shorn and his spurs went to rust. One very good proof that the contrast can survive and make loyalties, even historical ones, a passionate and intimate affair, is the appearance of such a book as Charles Wheeler Coit's narrative of the royal martyr, King Charles I.

Mr. Coit's is a very good history. It confines itself with commendable rigor to its declared object, the justification of its hero both as king and Christian. It throws a merciless light on the aims and practices of the sectaries who brought him to ruin and death; their passage of a bill of attainder against Lord Strafford, in defiance of the Constitution and by the vote of a single chamber; their iniquitous "Purge," by which the Commons were reduced to a rump of sixty members, all pledged to the king's death; their condonation of Scottish rebellion (accompanied with requests for foreign help) while the Irish rising was put in the forefront of Charles's offendings. Religious intolerance is restored to the place from which modern constitutional historians have shown a tendency, natural enough, to depose it. Every one of the famous "remonstrances" and "bills of right" is shown to have featured as its leading article a demand for more hangings, quarterings and parboilings of Papists, spectacles at which the godly Puritan, denied the cock-fighting and bear-baiting of malignant Cavaliers, might lick his lips unblamed.

Against this background of spite and brutality, the pathetic figure of the "White King" is projected for us with all the conviction of an avowed Royalist and high-church partisan: his chastity in a dissolute court, his love of manly exercises, the innocent ardor of his wooing in Spain, his devotion to wife and children, his unswerving piety, his desire for a reunion of the two separated branches of the old church of Anselm and Iona which could produce the really remarkable letter to the Pope quoted in the appendix on page 392.

The charge of guile and shiftiness so profusely brought against Charles by historians of the school of Macaulay and Green is faced fairly by Mr. Coit. He reminds us that from the time the king was sold to his enemies by the Scottish covenanters up to the very eve of his death, he was beseiged by emissaries from two and sometimes three parties, each representing themselves to be spokesmen for the real will of the nation; and also that he was under a restraint that grew closer and closer even to the point of danger from assassination. To expect a man in his position to have refused to grasp at any chance of an escape to where negotiations would have had some meaning, is expecting a great deal from human nature, even royal human nature. Compulsion is very much in the air just now. Without caring to define it, we may reasonably ask what bond of honor or warranty could inhere in a contract entered into between parties, one of whom was a prisoner, guarded and spied upon at every moment of his life, and marked for death if his answers were found unsatisfactory.

Mr. Coit asks us that we should not prejudge the case for king against commons in the light of modern democracy. Personally, using what light modern democracy has left us, we feel that, were the issue set before us today we might well find ourselves with old Sir Harry Verney ("I have eaten the king's bread all my life and will not desert him in his need")—with John Hampden, who had the luck to perish on Chalgrove Field; with that visionary republican born out of time, Sir Harry Vane, who washed his hands of the whole affair when he saw decency set at naught and perished later with the shadow of Massachusetts forests and lakes in his puzzled brain; certainly, were we a Catholic, with the king's army, if only because the king gave us a run for our lives—anywhere and everywhere in short, except with the brutal, canting and lawless men who called Cromwell their chief. Rather than live with them we feel we would have died with Charles, and it is probably to make us feel that way that Mr. Coit's fine history was written.

Mr. John Drinkwater is an instance of the dangers that beset a reputation fortuitously acquired. The author of a drama that was successful largely through the innovation of an Englishman busying himself with American domestic history, he has used the attention it earned him to justify adventure in fields for which writing for the theatre is less than no education. He has edited an "outline" on English literature that was competent rather than stimulating, and now in his quaintly named Mr. Charles, King of England, attempts a serious and detailed study of one of the most enigmatic figures in the long line that followed Banquo's ghost past the witch-kettle at Birnan Wood.

It may be asserted at once that the result is disappointing. The opportunity that lay to Mr. Drinkwater's hand for etching in a portrait from tradition and anecdote is left almost untouched. Instead, he has chosen long historical digressions from material available on the shelves of any public library. As one glaring instance, the behavior, public and private, of Charles during the Popish Plot hoax of 1678, is hardly mentioned, but we have a summary of Dr. Oates's doings which can be found in any edition of the Dictionary of National Biography. No real attempt to get behind the façade of cynical opportunism which Charles chose as his armor against fate is attempted until we have reached page 219 (in a volume of only 300) which begins with the words: "And now we have to take some measure of the man for whom so much had been suffered, and of whom so much was hoped."

Lord Clarendon seems to have been the source from which Mr. Drinkwater has drawn the bulk of his facts and also the model whom he has chosen, consciously or unconsciously, to follow in his style. There are no nobler periods in the sustained oratorical form than Hyde's, but it is disconcerting

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to find passages here in which it is almost textually reproduced: "Public theory and religious emotion contributed much to that evolution, but not all. His natural talents and blemishes, emphasized alike by his almost unexampled experience, are, inevitably, the fundamental condition of Charles's character, but to the lungs of character environment is air, and these circumstances with others must be so considered."

Where Mr. Drinkwater leaves his references and enters into the realm of speculation, the result is sometimes of a devastating naïveté. "It is as idle to suppose," we are gravely informed on page 221, "that license must be accompanied by every defect of character as to believe that all religious men are good." "It cannot be argued [this on page 41] that he was prompted at the end by a desire for the consolations of religion, since he could have received these from the assurances of his own divines." Mr. Drinkwater's conception of psychology in extremis must be peculiar to himself. One wonders whether the thought occurred to him to consult the Huddleston relation of the king's last moments, so marvelously utilized by Father Benson in his Oddsfish, a novel, it is true, but a thoughtful document none the less, which comes far nearer to an intelligent understanding of Charles's character than anything in the book now under consideration.

To point out isolated misjudgments and historical lapses is an ungrateful task, but they have their value as an index to how far original documents have been used. Cromwell, we are told, "devised the Ironside uniform, thereby scoring a superb dramatic effect." So little did Cromwell devise any uniform that military documents of the time nearly all mention such expedients as a handkerchief wound round one arm, or a sash worn in a certain manner in order that friends might be distinguished from foes in the melée. To find "a touch of inspired nobility" in the campaign of "Thorough" conducted in Ireland by Strafford is as unsupported a flight of fancy as the discovery that "never in history has the Church of God been more shamelessly employed in defiance of any conceivable will of Heaven" than in the century of Port Royal, Saint Francis de Sales, the Ursulines and the Canada missions.

The authentic life of the second Charles, in short, is still to write. We hope it will be undertaken by someone able to appreciate the complexity inherent in a man who could excuse a festive Lord Mayor for hugging him on the plea that "whoever is drunk is as great as a king," who could pass from signing a death warrant for a missionary priest, to fall upon his knees before an altar in his Catholic wife's oratory, and who died turning a witty face to the world, after showing a repentant one to his Eternal Judge.

HENRY LONGAN STUART.

Translations and Tomfooleries, by Bernard Shaw. New York: Brentano's. $2.25.

MR. SHAW'S enviable cleverness has too often been the means of his own undoing. His really pathetic inability—or refusal—to free himself from his own clownishness has damned him more effectively (pragmatically speaking) than have the most savage onslaughts of his many adversaries. No intelligent person, it is true, can now remain altogether unstimulated by his opinions, but how much healthier would be his influence if he could only have resisted the temptation to be forever playing the court jester! Thus, whereas his preface to Saint Joan should have delighted and helped hard rationalists as well as orthodox Christians, its gratuitous and

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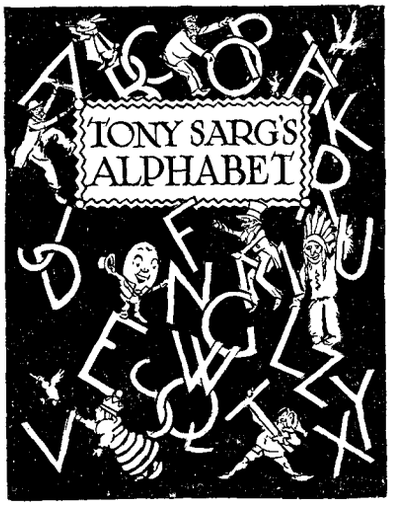

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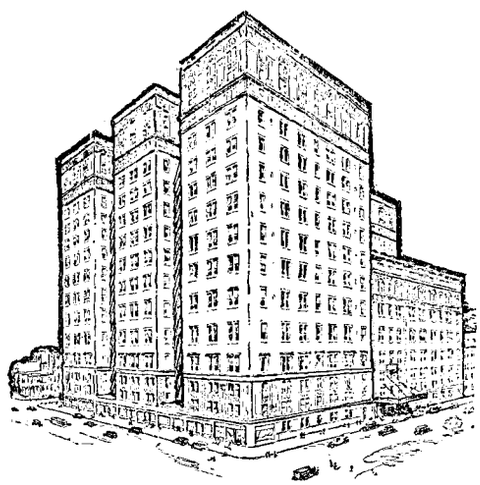

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exaggerated dialectical somersaults tended only to give needless offense to both groups.

The ideas, or rather the mental moods, underlying Shaw's more ambitious productions have always been distinguished by a certain tremendous, almost miraculous, fundamental sanity, apparent even through the ground-glass screen of his buffoonery. That this sanity has been on the increase is evident, moreover, to anyone who rereads *Man and Superman*, together with its postscript, The Revolutionist's Handbook. This work, dating from 1903, now seems surprisingly trite: a hundred of our lesser Shavians can do that sort of thing better today. But Candida, Caesar and Cleopatra, and Androcles begin to reveal the healthily weeping philosopher behind the idiotically grinning one; and Heartbreak House, Back to Methuselah, and Saint Joan at last bring us into contact with a mind of unmistakable profundity and courage.

Always, however, Shaw remains the victim of his cursed facility of expression and of his superficial verve. His recent seventieth-birthday speech, intended as a blast against muddy and hypocritical thinking both within and without socialistic circles, evoked only a series of hollow reverberating guffaws. It was, in a sense, a tragedy—a tragedy which appears great in proportion to the extent of our realization of the actual necessity for the presence and influence among us of minds like Shaw's. It is all right for his audiences to indulge in convulsions of hilarity, if they then go home to think and weep (with or for him: it doesn't matter)—only they don't, probably. And so his career as a comic dramatist remains a tragedy.

But if his essays in high seriousness have been so consistently damned by his own cleverness, Shaw's present collection of assorted trivialities, most of them already known through stage performances or separate publication, shows the other and brighter side of his curious career. For here his avowed clowning finds salvation in its undertone of zealous sincerity. It is a book of oddments and trifles, of pure entertainment, of sheer nonsense and slapstick, but it is illuminated by flashes of surprisingly genuine penetration and unusual sense. "The following playlets," says his preface (which, characteristically, sounds like vanity, although it expresses mere truth) "are tomfooleries pure and simple. . . . I do not mean that their words are utterly void of wit and wisdom, or their figures characterless; for this kind of work would be unbearable if it added deficiency to folly. . . . They may disgust the admirers of my more pretentious work; but these highbrows must remember that there is a demand for little things as well as for big things, and that as I happen to have a few little things in my shop I may as well put them in the window with the rest."

As there is no coherence in the volume, only a rapid survey of its contents is possible by way of review. Here we deal with a mixture of all kinds of ingredients, and it is the individual reader's pleasurable task to pick the juicy raisins out of the plum pudding.

The translation of Siegfried Trebitsch's play, Jitta's Atonement, was a deed of simple gratitude, for Trebitsch has been for years Shaw's apostle and translator in Germany and Austria. Shaw obviously did not undertake the job (an arduous one, if we are to believe his assertion that his knowledge of German is infinitesimal) because he saw anything like transcendent merit in the drama. It is a conventional, artificial Viennese stage-piece, dealing superficially with the ancient problem of marital infidelity. Quite justifiably, Shaw has transformed

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the unpleasant "melancholic delicacy" of the original into a frankly comedic version of the cuckolded husband.

The Admirable Bashville, or Constancy Unrewarded, is a blank-verse treatment of the early pugilistic novel, Cashel Byron's Profession, written in a week's time in order to protect the author's copyright. "Blank verse," says the preface, "is so childishly easy and expeditious (hence, by the way, Shakespeare's copious output) that by adopting it I was enabled to do within the week what would have cost me a month in prose." The result is quite delicious, and should be read in connection with the still more delectable preface to the novel itself, in which Shaw discovered with amazement that men and women have actually been made "by their own fancies in the image of the imaginary creatures of his youthful fictions, only much stupider."

Press Cuttings, described as a topical sketch compiled from the editorial and correspondence columns of the daily papers during the women's war in 1909, satirizes not only the militant feminists, but also the still more ridiculously militant anti-feminists.

Passion, Poison and Petrifaction, or The Fatal Gazogene, is a brief tragedy for barns and booths. The irate husband poisons his rival Adolphus. Lime is suggested as an antidote, whereupon the actors cast shoes at the ceiling and Adolphus eats the fragments as they fall.

The Glimpse of Reality (a tragedietta) The Fascinating Foundling ("a disgrace to the author") and the Music Cure ("a piece of utter nonsense") are similar grotesqueries.

ERNEST BRENNECKE, JR.

Galahad: Enough of His Life to Explain His Reputation, by John Erskine. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

VERY wisely, in his first chapter, John Erskine states that he purposely leaves out all references to the Grail, Joseph of Arimathea its keeper, the Round Table, and Excalibur. Thus he does not tread on anybody's toes and does not lay himself open to the charge of being sacrilegious.

The old adage that "practice makes perfect" applies perfectly to John Erskine, as this book, although it is of the same type as The Private Life of Helen of Troy, is vastly superior. His ironical rapier is wielded with consummate skill, and cuts in a much finer fashion than in his first novel.

The story of Galahad adapts itself to the Erskine style more perfectly than does the story of "Helen," because it has more action in it and consequently, moves at a swifter pace. The author concerns himself with three main characters: Lancelot, Guinevere, and Galahad; and with three minor ones: Arthur, Elaine, and Elaine the White. Only enough of the life of Galahad "to explain his reputation" is given—but it is explained successfully, after a John Erskinesque fashion. In the same manner, Mr. Erskine explains the reputations of the other characters with a keenness and delicacy of perception of the subtle side of their natures that is truly remarkable.

This book is more "dated," in the sense of time, than "Helen," as the story is so much nearer our own times and characters necessarily do things that class them in a certain period. As in "Helen" there is much dialogue, shrewd observations and philosophizing. But underneath all the light talk there is a deep philosophy, which is, in spite of the age of the story, essentially modern.

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CURRENT MAGAZINES

The American Scandinavian Review has taken a high place in general esteem among the admirable publications of international presses in New York. In its special work of promoting harmony between America and Scandinavia, in its enlightening papers on the arts and life of America and the lands of the old Vikings, it serves a very valuable purpose, reinforced by a Yuletide number for December that contains several striking articles as well as some particularly fine reproductions of the drawings of Ferdinand Boberg. The story of A Fourteenth-Century Journey Through the Realm of Norway is very finely rendered by Alexander Bugge, and Old-Time Christmas in Sweden by Louise Hagberg is full of interesting and graphic suggestions, many of them novel and inspiriting. Old customs live long in these Scandinavian lands, where the love of the native shores and the native traditions is strong enough to inspire our fullest admiration.

The Signet, the magazine of the federated alumnae of the Sacred Heart schools in the United States, bears all the marks of merit and achievement that we should expect from that distinguished congregation. Under the editorship of Dr. Mary Blanche Kelly, are coöperating some twenty representatives of these schools in various parts of our country, with the result that The Signet gives us in its current issue a really fine display of literary talent. Conspicuous among its contents are impressions of the Eucharistic Congress, by the editor; Catholic Women in Politics, by Mary Rivinius Fetterman; A Pilgrimage to Palestine, by Agnes F. Keyes (Franklin C. Keyes) Lake Louise and the Angels, by Katherine Clemens; and Persecution Old and New, by Florence Gilmore.

The Month (London) features a timely paper by Father Herbert Thurston on The Church's International Enemy—The Freemasons. Father Joseph Keating gives an authoritative account of The Manchester Congress and continues his Impressions of America, noting that, considering the Catholic numbers and prosperity "the amount of Catholic productive scholarship remains pitiably small," with notes upon the church institutions of Cincinnati and St. Louis that are valuable in showing the reaction of a very superior mind "takin' notes."

The Menorah Journal for this month earns our admiration as in the past. It is interesting to read the Jewish reactions of H. Ben-Shahar in The Adversary's Note-Book, to the remnant of Jewish life and traditions he has unearthed in Carpentras. Such devotion and pride in one's own traditions cannot fail to inspire admiration even among outsiders. The Present Conflict in Zionist Policy, by Johan J. Smertenko, and a series of excellent editorial and book notes make up a representative number.

CONTRIBUTORS

Jules-Bois, French poet, essayist and psychologist, is the author of L'Humanite Divine; and other books.

Dolores Benardete is a writer on early English literature.

Condé B. Pallen, one of the editors of the Catholic Encyclopedia, is the author of The New Rubaiyat; and other books.

C. R. Morey has been professor in charge of the American School of Classical Studies in Rome. He is the author of East Christian Pictures in the Freer Collection; and Lost Mosaics and Frescoes of Rome.

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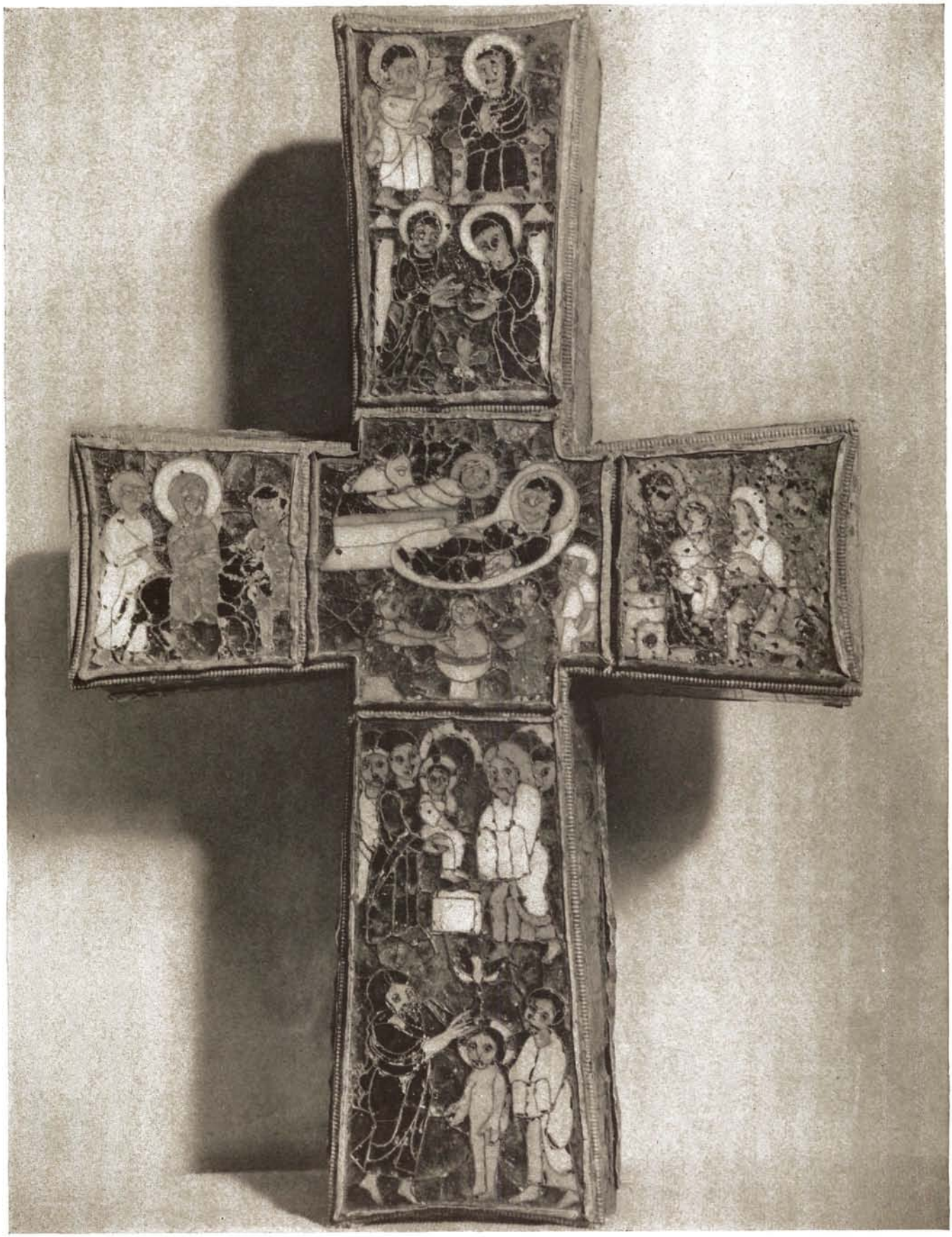

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